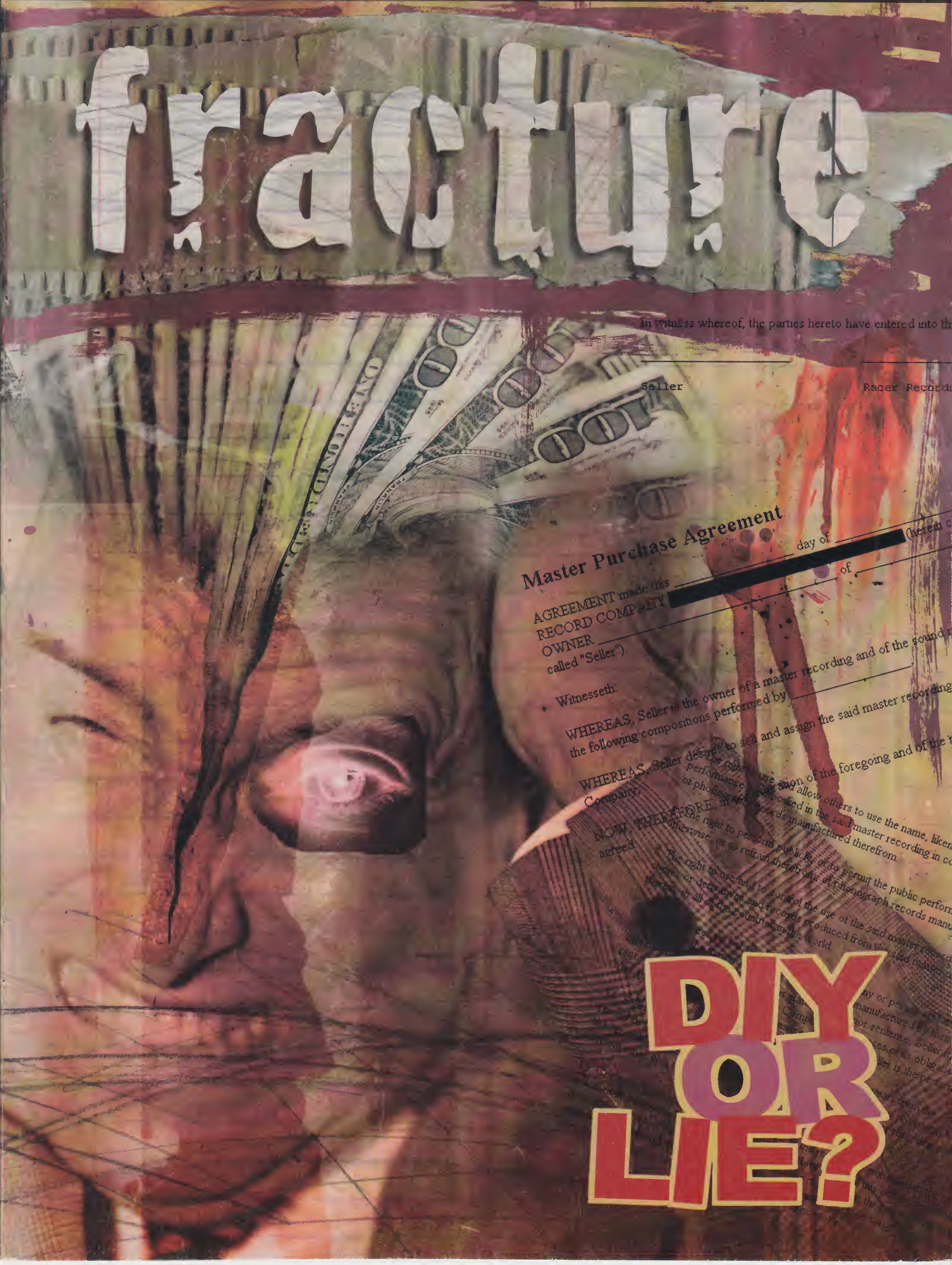
ISSUE #22 • SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2002 • FREE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

fracture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called "Seller").
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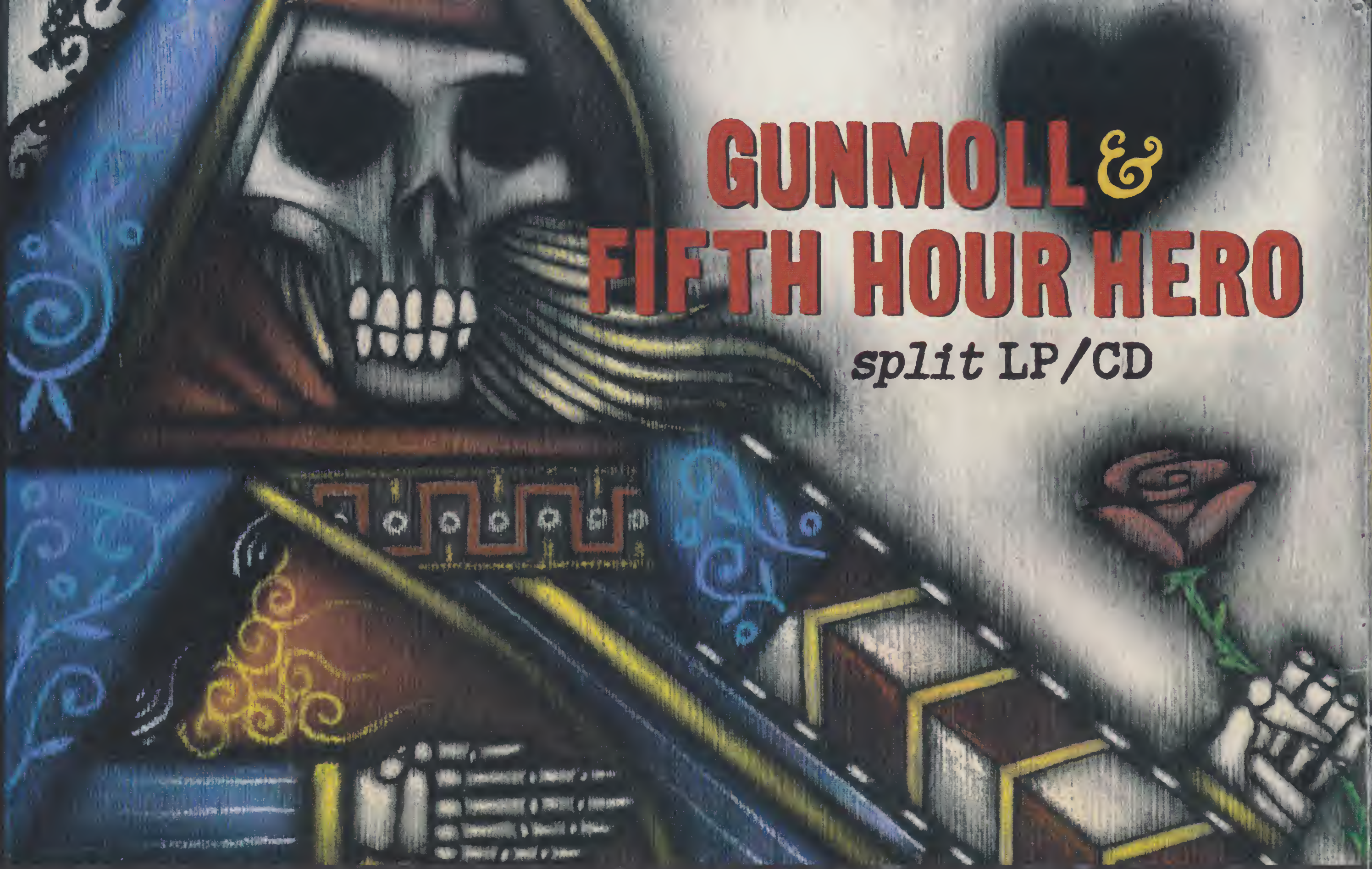

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TWELVE HOUR TURN
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SEAN/BEN
RUGGER BUGGER DISCS
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Well bollocks to them all/keep smashing at the wall/pile the pressure on and the government will fall.Wise words mate.No reason to start with a conflict song really except it was the first thing to come to my head which is pretty amazing in these days of extreme world cup and big brother action.Rugger bugger was a small diy punk label and nothing more.We existed in the world before computers,emails,punk being big business and greed and sadly now it's time to stop.I've had enough-records,bands,bands,records,fuck it.I've been doing it since i was 17 and playing in bands since i was 12.I've done my time and now it's time for the kids to take over.

Most of the time it's been a pleasure and without the help of loads of people(ben,my brother,damaged,active,the bands,smithy,tuck etc) it would have been impossible but there are people who have fucked me off over the last 15+ years and i thought why not do my one and only advert in a magazine and mention them.Fuck you very much:

1.joolz from guns n wankers/dog piss.He borrowed £1000 from me after i sold the dog piss album to honest don's for £5,000(bare in mind i'd already spent nearly £2,000 on recordings/mastering etc) and refuses to pay me back because he never made any money from the album.I lent the money as a friend and you abused that friendship.Fuck off

2.DS4a-dodgy bristol distribution company who carried on taking records from me and had no intention of paying me the money.they still owe over £500.Fuck them

3.phil atkins in norwich who was the only person who sent for and never paid for the live snuff album in 1990.You still owe me a fiver.Fuck off

4.Parcelforce/the post office.A postman was caught stealing money from my letters in the late 90's.he was prosecuted and i never got one pence compensation.also parcelforce who lose boxes like it was their job to.fuck them and their law

5.Broccoli for splitting up.I loved and believed in that band and spent a lot of time,energy and money on them and all they did was take records to sell on tour and never pay for them.That was the reason i did a singles cd to get back cash owed.It has to be said it was mainly one member-grant who went on to be a born again christian,a liar,and a fucking massive dissapointment to me on a personal level.fuck you and the church

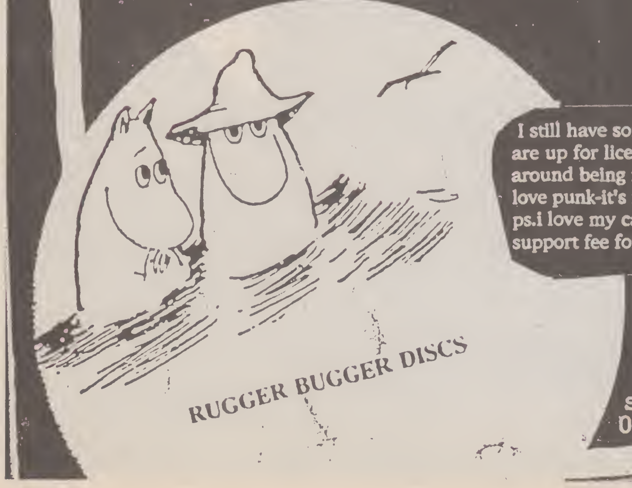
6.the mcps and emi publishing for trying to sue me over the wat tyler version of i just called to say i love you.get a sense of humour and get a life-i owed you about £20 for the publishing.the mcps are leeches.fuck em

7.i can't even remember their name and i can't even be bothered to look at it on a record,but this greek label licenced the mob and zounds albums to do on vinyl and they just ended up being a nightmare to deal with.fuck off and stay out of punk

8.simon and his fucking diy punk rock shop in glasgow.diy does it mean never paying people or sending the records back.i know you've had things tough but get your shit together.never trust a hippie claimed the sex pistols but i say never trust a punk and especially one of the emo variety.fucklety off

9.Capdown for saying they were gonna sign to rugger bugger worldwide when they were just a bunch of straight edge kids in milton keynes.Instead they went with household name and the rest they say is history.Fuck off.
(Sorry this one is a lie because i ran out of people to moan about)

10.myself for doing this advert and sending a cheque that bounced.get your lawyers onto me monk man.fuck myself



I still have some releases left and i sell everything cheap.so get in touch.all the records are up for licence as long as it can be sorted out with the bands. Of course i'll still be around being rude,slagging people off,calling all new music shit,being stupid and more.i love punk-it's my life and punk has been good to me.
ps.i love my cat and while i think about it conflict still owe thatcher on acid £50 for the support fee for the brixton academy gig in 1987

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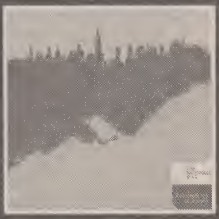

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reviewerplaylists

RUSSELL REMAINS >>>

GOO GOO DOLLS : Gutterflower CD
LADDERBACK : Trigger Themes CD
SOLEA : S/T CDEP
B. BJORK & OPERATORS : S/T CD
LITTLE EXPLORER : advance album
THE DAGDA : Threefold CD
I EXCUSE : Burn The Empty... CD
FLOOR : S/T CD
KURT : La Guard CD
DEAD MEADOW : Howls From... CD

HILARY ELLIS >>>

THE STEREO : Rewind + Record CD
AUDIO KARATE : Space Camp CD
ENON : High Society CD
ANTI-MANIAX : As Long as... CD
HUNTER GATHERER : Low... CD
SENSEFIELD : Tonight & Forever CD
BEN WEASEL : FIDATEVI CD
JAWBREAKER : Etc CD
COPPERPOT JOURNALS : New CD
SUNSHINE : Necromance CD

PETE CRAVEN >>>

BREZHNEV : Live in Brighton
BOXED IN : Live in Brighton
LOS PERROS : Live in Brighton
ROCKET / CORE : S/T 7"
OSLO MOTHERFUCKERS : New CD
SUGARSHACK : Spinning Wheels CD
JERRY SPDER GANG : Dope... CD
SOVIETTES : TCCP 7"
GHOULIES : Communication CD-R
GLORYHOLES : Knock You Up CD

GAZ SUSPECT >>>

DEADLINE : Live HITS 2002
NEWTOWN GRUNTS : Disgruntled CD
DOWN AND AWAY : Who's Got... CD
V/A : Suburban Life Sentence CD
MAPS : Model American CD
17 STITCHES : The Antisocial CD
RESISTANCE '77 : Live HITS 2002
GBH : Live HITS 2002
THE RESTARTS : Slumworld CD
DOA : Win The Battle CD

DAN McKEE >>>

MELVINS : Hostile Ambient Take... CD
FIVE KNUCKLE : Lost For Words CD
RAMMSTEIN : Mutter CD
PHANTOM LIMBS : Applied... CD
NICK CAVE : No More Shall We Part CD
MR BUNGLE : Disco Volante CD
NEAR MISS : Gentle Art of... CD
THE BEACH BOYS : Pet Sounds CD
BREZHNEV : www.bullshit/control CD
MEATLOAF : Bat Out of Hell CD

MONK DAVE >>>

V/A : 20 Years of Dischord box set
HOT WATER MUSIC : Caution CD
JAWBREAKER : Etc 2 x LP
NO CHOICE : Try and You Might... CD
SHUTDOWN : 1990 - 1995 CD
GUNMOLL / FIFTH HOUR : split CD
HOT WATER / NO CHOICE : live at TJ's
EMBRACE : S/T remastered CD
ETA : We Are The Attack 7"
STRIKE ANYWHERE : Fracture gig

DAVID STUART >>>

JAWBREAKER : Etc 2 x LP
RENO DIVORCE : Naysayers... CD
BEN WEASEL : FIDATEVI CD
MORRISSEY : Everything!
SHUTDOWN : 1990 - 1995 CD
MATT SKIBA / KEV 7 : Split CD
CHAMBERLAIN : Exit 263 CD & Video
SENSEFIELD : Tonight & Forever CD
THE BUSINESS : Welcome to... CD
COPPERPOT JOURNALS : New CD

SEAN McKEE >>>

MINORITY REPORT : Movie
LAST HOURS OF TORMENT : Demo
ALL THAT REMAINS : Behind... CD
TENFOLDTRUTH : Demo
THE LAST CHANCE : Demo
CHAMPION : Count Our Numbers CD
WITHDRAWN : Seeds of Humanity CD
MORNING AGAIN : Cleanest War CD
FLOORPUNCH : Fast Times... CD
PERVERSION OF IDOLATRY : Demo

MEL HUGHES >>>

SPERMBIRDS : Something To... CD
VERBAL ASSAULT : Trial LP
VERBAL ABUSE : An American... CD
REACHING FORWARD : Burning... CD
RAMBO : Down The Drain LP
MINOR THREAT : Complete CD
7 SECONDS : The Crew LP
DEAD KENNEDYS : In God We... 12"
DRI : Dealing With It LP
YOUTH OF TODAY : We're Not In... LP

GRAHAM SLEIGHTHOLME >>>

HENRY FIAT'S : Makes Your... 7"
KYLESA : S/T LP
DS 13 / BOXED IN : Live
NARCOSIS : Heart Slows Down CD
SPITTING TEETH : Legacy CD
THE DAGDA : S/T LP
LEXICON DEVIL : Book
HAYMAKER : S/T CD
Y / MY OWN LIES : Split LP
VARIOUS : Wild In The Streets 2/3 CD's

fracture

regulars

Page 10 : **Columns**
"Get some fucking quality control" - 100 Reasons

Page 80 : **Record Reviews**
The punk rock gospel, we're never wrong - ever

Page 110 : **Fanzine Reviews**
Some kids are still doing it themselves - bonus!

interviews

Page 52 : **Academy Morticians**
Young, opinionated, quirky UK punks!

Page 58 : **The Pavers**
Scott Reynolds shows us what he's made of!

Page 68 : **Dag Nasty**
"Can I Say" line-up in reformation shocker!

Page 74 : **Q And Not U**
Your new favourite Dischord band!

features

DIY OR LIE? SPECIAL
Hate us more than you already do...

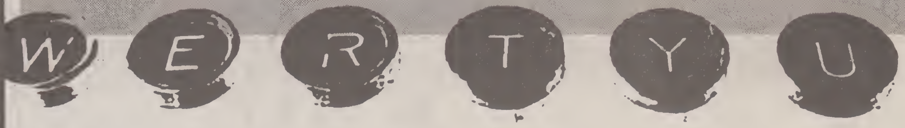
Page 38 : **The Survey**
Dario Adamic questions "The Scene"

Page 44 : **Article #1**
Musicians For a Decent Living Wage

Page 48 : **Article #2**
Youth Culture For Sale

FRACTURE #22

"FraKture" cover main photograph by Ross from Douglas.



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Monk,

I have a very early, embryonic idea for Fracture #22. I've noticed over the last few months how much "selling out" on punk has become a non-issue. People just don't really seem fucking bothered about it any more. Even people you'd think would support DIY over major label intervention seem to have this shrugging, indifferent "who cares, more kids will hear them if they are on Walt Disney Records" attitude. This winds me up more than anything else related to punk / HC, and it's happening at all ends of the spectrum. Hatebreed, New Found Glory, Poison The Well, yadda yadda..

Anyway, what I'd like to do is invite the regular Fracture columnists, AND some new blood, to pen some articles for issue #22 losely based around the theme of "here's why DIY will always rock and why major label punk is just fucking retarded" and hopefully arouse some passion and debate, and maybe snap some people out of their MTV induced trances and remind them that punk and HC aren't spectator sports or consumer cultures. I don't want these columns to be be gushing, nostalgic, rose-tinted accounts of how the scene was better when we were young and naive or any of that shit. I want them to be frank, confrontational and provocative accounts, from the hearts of kids who are active within punk NOW, talking about how things are NOW, what punk means NOW. That type of thing.

I know Fracture hasn't really had any 'themes' for its issues in the past, so I think that maybe it could help liven things up a bit. And it's also because the line between die hard DIY kids and major label sympathisers is getting increasingly blurred and I truly think it's time to re-affirm some opinions on the matter, whether people like it or not. I'm hoping it will act as a call to arms for the true few who'd still be into punk if there was no cool American bands, no MTV, no guestlists, no clothes / label endorsements, etc, etc, etc.

What do you think of this idea?

Sean McKee, London, 12th June, 2002.

contributions

Absolutely! All you have to do is get in contact with your ideas, be it in the form of articles, interviews, letters, artwork, columns, scene reports and so on, and we'll let you know if you're on to something good. What do **YOU** want to see in FRACTURE? If possible, please email or send all text contributions on **PC compatible disk**, preferably as a **TXT/ RTF file**, but if you don't have a computer then try and send it in in some kind of typed format so we can scan it (10 point size and above, and not in all CAPITALS please). However, if you are of the luddite disposition, then the written word WILL do. Get your stuff seen by thousands of people! And hey, if your contribution doesn't get printed, it's nothing personal, we can only print as much stuff as we have pages, so don't go mad and try to kill or us anything. Thanks.

subscriptions

Please note that our subscription rates have now gone up to accommodate the new fat size. You can still get single copies for $3.00 ppd (world) or 54 pence SAE (UK), but be aware that in the past we have run out of 'zines within days of it getting printed, so a TEN ISSUE subscription means you won't miss an issue. And sometimes subscribers have been known to get free CD's so it's a good deal really!

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fracture

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Johnny Morrow

> "I can only find solace in the memories he has left me with. Sometimes hilarious, but also a strong person who had a heart of gold"

On Saturday June 22nd 2002 John Paul Morrow, known by most as vocalist for Iron Monkey, died in his sleep. He had been undergoing kidney dialysis for several years which had put a lot of strain on his heart. He suffered a huge heart attack and didn't wake up. I thought it would be appropriate for Fracture to salute Johnny's life and his career as one of the most vital and influential artists to grace the UK's independent / underground / hardcore scene. I know that there will be people reading this who knew Johnny far better than I did so I hope you can appreciate that this is (and can only be) written from my perspective.

My first encounter of Johnny was when Iron Monkey came to my home town and played one of their first gigs. I was greatly anticipating their set, seeing as a bunch of large and intimidating men sound checked a song that was surely one of the heaviest things I'd heard in a while. My band was opening the gig so we did our set and, at the time, my novice-like shouts fared me well as I was only eighteen or so. It was time for the 'Monkey's set and they launched into '666 Pack'. The brutal Sabbathian riffs gave way to Johnny's first outburst which instantly saw my mic stand flying across the small stage area before he turned around and unleashed his tortured screams. That initial sight was one I'll never forget. Their set went on and crushed us all with my mic getting swung around and let go so that it smashed head first into one of the dingy basements walls. Now, if I'd tried to explain to my folks that my mic was broken at the hands of a seemingly lunatic singer that night, they would never have understood! I kind of thought it was all cool though.

It wasn't until we shared the stage together again a year or two later that I realised how humble and respectful Johnny actually was. We played before 'Monkey again and afterwards he complimented me on the set being the best of ours he'd seen. He didn't have to say that. Suffice to say that everybody who knew Johnny knows how much of a gentleman he really was. You only have to go to his online book of condolences to see that so many people have had so many endearing things to say about him. The music of Iron Monkey and, later on, Armour of God, Murder One, The Tuskan Coalition, My War and his several hip hop projects are now left as a permanent reminder of Johnny's talent, charisma and passion for creativity. It goes without saying that he will never be forgotten and that his influence will be carried onward in many bands to come. On behalf of everyone involved with Fracture I'll finish with what I hope has been a suitable tribute by offering my condolences to all of Johnny's family, friends and loved ones. Johnny, you've left one hell of a footprint on this Earth and we're all proud to have witnessed it.

To sign the book of condolences please visit
www.johnnymorrow.com

Words: Jim
Picture: Mark[sound]

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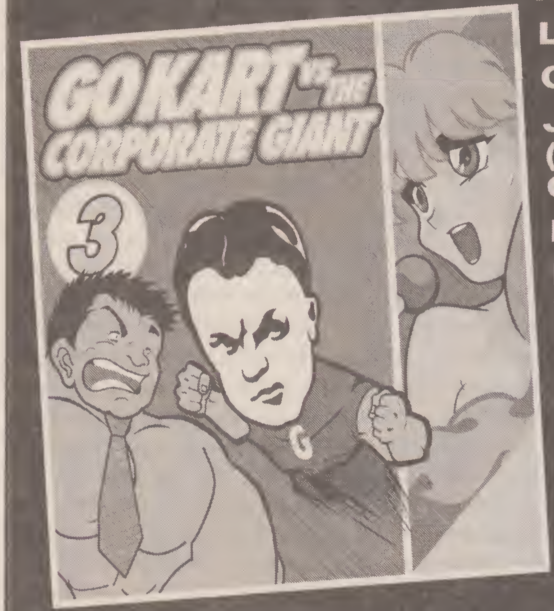
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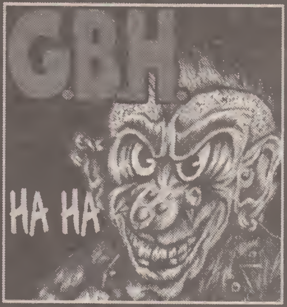

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EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

£ MONK DAVE

Someone told me recently that whenever I write a column in Fracture, it's the first thing that they read because, as "editor" of Fracture (not really true, Russell has as much of a say as to what goes in as I do), they feel that whatever I write will set the tone for the entire issue. Although I would not really agree with that most of the time, I guess for this issue it is a fair enough thought process. This same person also said that the "theme issue" you're holding in your hands now was a bad idea and was too negative a concept, so I hope they're not too offended by what we have to offer this time around.

One thing you will find in this issue is a multitude of differing opinions relating to the broad topic of what I guess we will call "The Underground vs Selling Out". This was something that we wanted to happen because when we announced the idea for this issue, I think a lot of people automatically assumed we would be "laying down the law", so to speak, about how (we felt) a record label should be run or how a band in the DIY punk underground should act, and if they didn't behave in this manner then they were "out" - this was not what we had in mind at all, which is why the initial mail-out went to so many people from all kinds of (punk) backgrounds. Most responses were positive, some were negative, but that was to be expected. Some Fracture writers even expressed concern over being ridiculed for their opinions on what I guess one would call "selling out" and so, as much as I tried to dissuade from doing so, they have decided not to write anything for this issue. That's a shame for sure, but then there are others who had similar opinions that *have* picked up the gauntlet, and so I thank them for that. It will be interesting to see what they have to say.

"Who cares? It's old hat..."

I know for a fact that a lot of people are going to react in that way to this issue. Some people may be so new to punk rock they might not even understand why this issue even exists, whilst others may have that classic MRR "Major Labels" issue (http://www.arancidamoeba.com/mrr/) and ask why we're even bothering to soil the world with our bullshit opinions when that is such an essential and practically timeless piece of work that all concerned punks should be aware of. All of these opinions are fair enough and I apologise in advance if this issue of Fracture is not something that interests you, but as someone said to me recently, "punk used to be about speaking out against the things you don't like - no one does that anymore, no one seems to care", and I agree wholeheartedly with those sentiments. Punk rock has become, for the most part, a passive consumer culture; something to do in your college years before getting a real job in the real world and settling down to a mainstream way of life. And what then? Sitting in the pub 20 years down the line, talking about when you "used to be" a punk, getting all nostalgic (and pathetic)? If that ever happened to me, I'd probably commit suicide.

My personal opinion is that MTV2 and Kerrang! Magazine / television has been largely to blame for this recent distortion of punk rock, forcing the idea that you can't partake in the movement, and that the bands are "untouchable", generating a larger than ever gap between band and audience. When that mindset has been forced upon someone from day one, that's all they will see, and the idea that they can make a 'zine, put a record out or even talk to a band member after they have played a gig is left behind for good. I mean, what was on the cover of Kerrang! In 1987? Lee Aaron, Zodiac Mindwarp, Ozzy Osbourne, Iron Maiden and Metallica. What's on the cover of Kerrang! nowadays? Jimmy Eat World, Alkaline Trio, Less Than Jake, AFI, "emo" bands... sure, these are bands at the more mainstream end of punk rock but that's why they're in there - because they "shift units" - the same way Metallica and Iron Maiden did 15 years ago. These bands are not in the pages of Kerrang! because that magazine gives two shits about punk rock and its underground roots / subculture, they're in there because Emap has to keep making a fast buck and Phil Alexander needs to be able to afford to get his hair crimped every other week. And hell, maybe "Horse and Pony" isn't selling as well as it used to either. It's all about keeping business profitable, and if that means covering what they think is "the next big thing" (ohhh, is it ska-punk, is it emo? Better get someone to find out quickly, gotta keep the money rolling in...) then that's what will be on the cover next week. And the week after that, and the week after that. I almost feel that, to an extent, punk rock has been "kidnapped" by a seedy, but well financed terrorist organisation that has something precious in its hands, but doesn't actually know what it is so are more than ready to fuck it up and throw it out when the next "big thing" comes along. And yes, when the mainstream drops the punk rock baton once more and concentrates instead on what will be selling magazines this week that will be a joyous day for the DIY contingent indeed - but until then, I almost feel as though it's our duty to kick up a fuss and scream "fuck you" as loud as we can in the faces of the tediously generic mainstream music industry that thinks it knows what's what...

All those people that were only at the Twelve Hour Turn gig in London because the new reviews sub-editor of the NME (or whatever) was in one of the support bands and you "just had to be seen there, darling" can get fucked; you're fucking spineless, faceless nobodies who are as much a part of "the industry" as the NME itself.

And the fucking major label A&R people who scrambled to subscribe to Fracture at the beginning of this year when bands like 100 Reasons were hitting the charts because they thought they could track down "the next big thing" via our pages can get fucked as well. You won't care in 6 months time so be sure not to re-subscribe when your sub runs out, won't you?

And the massive slew of "emo rock with a hint of nu metal" bands that send in their demo's for review with the press sheet that states how proud they are to have been played on Radio One, and how they're "really popular locally and are one of the countries brightest new hopes" can get fucked as well. Why did you even send your CD-R to us? Do I have "Stepping Stone to Stardom" tattooed across my fucking forehead? No, so fuck off with the creepy press pack already. I've seen a hundred this week and that's a hundred too many.

That's pretty much how I feel about these things right now, and yes, this is all *personal* (antagonistic, man that guy's a twat) *opinion*. As always, I do not speak for any other Fracture writers at all, and I am sure that other people's opinions this issue will differ wildly from mine - but then that's what punk rock "journalism" should be about - putting the ideas in and thrashing them out until what's left is a situation where the readers can make up their own minds. We're not the fucking (goddamn) ChristCore Collective.com whose sole purpose is to "pressure" you into a way of thinking that we feel is right because otherwise "you're going to burn in hell, motherfucker"... we're just here to let you know what we think about some things that we feel are relevant to us as both a punk community and an independent "free press" fanzine. And this issue is just a more specific, defined version of that.

So anyway, now that I have "set the tone" for this issue, I bid you well and say my goodbyes. Thanks for reading and, as always, your feedback is very much appreciated.

End Note.
Yeah, just call me Mykel Board already but hell, half our columnists just use our pages to advertise their shit (haha) so why the fuck not me? So I started this record label up called Newest Industry. I did this because I wanted to put something back into the actual music end of the punk scene before it fucking died completely. Now what you've got to realise is, I ain't just gonna throw my money at any old Tom, Dick and fuckin' Harry so please don't start sending me a shit load of (shit) demo CD-R's with your press pack, cute photo and slime drenched self praising press release... but what that does mean is whatever I put out, I'm two thousand percent behind - and therefore means the releases will probably be pretty few and far between - but then why the fuck would I want to put something out I didn't love as much as, say, Leatherface or Naked Raygun? Oh, money you say? Hell yeah, emo rock is pretty fucking financially rewarding right now, ain't it... Huh. So anyway, I'm doing this album by Cardiff band No Choice as my first release. They've been around on and off for 20 years but they've moved with the times, they crank out some killer fucking punk rock on par with the last Pegboy or Leatherface albums and they also happen to be some of the nicest guys I've ever met. They've got politics, tunes, sincerity and they've been around long enough to not be influenced by 'the current trend'. And hell, they just played locally with Strike Anywhere and Hot Water Music - like, what the fuck more do you want? That's me done, cheers.

SEAN MCKEE

DIY OR LIE?

This Spirit Can't Be Broken.
So you've probably clocked our little dig at a certain glossy 'alternative culture' magazine this issue. You may have picked up on a few other sentiments regarding such publications and the bands they perpetually seem to cover to sell copies each week. But we aren't having a pop at the magazines themselves. It doesn't upset us, in fact, we're LAUGHING. LAUGHING because OUR magazine is free, and yet the magazines you see in WH Smith trying to tell you about 'emo' or 'straightedge' are a product that need to be sold, otherwise overheads don't get paid, staff don't get paid, and the whole thing implodes. No one at Fracture gets paid. We are motivated by love for punk and hardcore, and knowing that "salaries", "wages", "fees", or "commission" just don't fucking come into it, man. Those words aren't even in our vocabularies. So send round the bailiffs to confiscate our computers or our biro's, and we'll carry on writing Fracture in our own fucking blood. And that's a sentiment echoed by just about every hardcore-punk band, label, 'zine, or distro that I have ever known.

So to clarify : What we're against is the market economics and tactics visible in just about every other type of music being used to gain some sort of commercial leverage from punk and hardcore, and to tap into what's 'cool' with the kids. We're against the way that such publications smudge the boundaries of musical genre for no other reason than to try and extract as much capital from it as possible. It all revolves around one big festering, steaming cauldron of stereotypes, being mixed by greedy, laughing pigs in businessmen suits, to produce a vat of easily shapeable identi-kit rock music that has instant marketability. Every time you turn on the telly, read a magazine or walk into a shop, you see commercialisation. Everything you can purchase has trundled along on a conveyer belt at some stage, being moulded / blasted / welded / cut into shape. And that includes every piece of music you hear on the radio, or watch on MTV too. Obviously music needs to be recorded, pressed, and released somewhere, but the question we ask that fans of many other music scenes overlook is WHO is making it, and why? What are the origins of it? Is there a big fat bloke in a suit at the very end of the line, and if so, who the fuck does he think he is to make out he's down with 'the kids'?

Now other music genres have different views on 'selling out', so the fact that a DMX CD or a Slipknot CD have the same profit margin in HMV doesn't really say anything about the integrity of those artists, but when a fucking PUNK CD sits alongside them and is subject to the same market value as them, then fuck me Houston, we have a problem. Punk is not supposed to originate in the same music 'factory' those artists did, or end up on the same shelves. Punk is supposed to come with a different, yet explicit context. Supposedly it is from the streets, the sewers, the alleys, the underground. The voices nobody wants to hear. The underdogs. The beaten down. The pissed off. The rejects who don't fit in with 'society'. If "punk" as a sub-culture ever gets to trundle along that same conveyer belt that your sisters Hearsay album did, then I'd pray the alarm bells would go off, the machinery would freeze, and it would be stamped 'reject' and destroyed by security, rather than make it out onto the shelves at the fucking "Mall".

Before punk was cute, and fluffy, and impressed girls, it was loud, obnoxious, offensive, politically motivated, and didn't fucking sell. What the hell happened to turn it into investment opportunity of the century? It got stripped of its meaning, that's what. What happened to all the offensive t-shirts with slogans that would get you spat at in the street? What happened to album covers depicting atrocities that Government would rather you didn't see? What happened to albums coming with essays about nuclear disarmament or vivisection? Punk has been so stripped of its venom, its rage, and its context that it stands today as a limp, anorexic shadow of its former self, unable to punch its way out of a wet paper bag, let alone change the world. Unless you are absolutely immersed in music, punk today is probably nothing more than background music on your favourite Playstation skate game, or a song off the American Pie soundtrack. Glossy, glitzy, cutesy, mainstream, and utterly fucking pathetic. But that's OK, 'cos that new BoyKissesLollies CD comes with a CD ROM of them having a pillow fight on tour, right?

And therein lies the problem. Mainstream music is sold to people between the ages of 12-20. You are *supposed* to grow out of music by the time you are out of your teens. Society conditions you to shove it all aside and start worrying about other distractions like marriage, mortgages and Black and Decker strimmers by then. As a result, the punk scene is viewed by the music industry as a graveyard for those stubborn hangers on, with their self righteous opinions and their cynical 'seen it all before' attitude.

They've got us right where they want us. Our punk 'terrain' works to their advantage. Our scene has become a testing area for bands to gain momentum before they are let out into the 'real world'. Whether you like it or not, bands ARE forming within the punk scene in order to launch themselves as a commercial viability elsewhere. Its the perfect set up for them. We're trusting. We're stupid. We fall for it time and time again. We welcome new faces at gigs, we lend our favourite albums to kids we only just met, and as a result we get spat at in the face. Just for fucking caring.

So its like this - We can either sit back, let 'the glossies' re-sell and repackage what we hold in our hearts (and watch the genuine punk bands get trampled by the wayside and beaten into submission as every other brainless sucker stampedes towards the next bandwagon) or we can stand our ground, keep offering out a hand to the new kids, (but be sure to turn it into a firm fucking boot back to where they came from if they expose themselves as profit motivated motherfuckers looking for a quick leg up), and celebrate those genuine bands and labels (unwaged, remember?) that even bother with the thankless task of involving themselves in 'the scene' for no other reason than that they actually care.

The chances are you've seen previous Fractures to this issue, and you know pretty much what we're about. But if you haven't, if you've stumbled across it for the first time, if our little plan of planting them in HMV and Virgin has worked, then please, please think about WHY we even fucking bother, WHY we don't sit back and let 'the man' spoon feed us our cultural identity? And remember, you didn't have to pay for it, did you? Well I guess that means we already won.

ASTON STEPHENS

DIY OR LIE?

"So then Aston, how do you afford to put out so much stuff?"

That's probably, whilst doing my label in the last two or three years since I started it up again, the question I get asked loads. And it probably is the one people want to work out, as Boss Tuneage, the label that I run / own / whatever does release records constantly, and I guess at a level (in release volumes anyway) that has more in common with the likes of a major label, be that a major major or a major indie!! I think a lot of people who don't necessarily know the label, or me personally, have presumed with the amount of releases the label does that Boss Tuneage has got funding from somewhere, be that a "silent partner" or a larger company. I can categorically say that that is not the case. The only funding the label does get is through me, and more directly, from the salary that my day job provides. To date I have never taken one penny in "profit" from the label, it just about in the grand scheme of things continues to break even, and whilst it does I'll keep churning out releases. That's not to say that it isn't a goal for the future that I would love to give up my day job and do the label full time, but that is unrealistic at this precise moment in time, and also I think that does raise ethical questions about how you approach that, but more about that later on!

Basically in this column I am going to give you a rough insight into how I personally like to operate my DIY label. This is not a blueprint or whatever of how I expect everyone else to work, to be honest I am not sure it's the best way, but it's the way that I like to work. Many labels would have differing opinions on many of my ways of working and running a label, and at the end of the day, how people want to run labels is entirely up to them, and if they are doing that in a way that is not ripping people off, be that the bands, manufacturers or "consumers" then fair play to them.

There's some basic subsections that I am going to talk about...

1.Recording.

Virtually all of the bands on Boss Tuneage pay for their own recording costs. I prefer this for two main reasons. Firstly, it means I don't have to lay out as much money upfront on a CD, which means I can put out more releases, more quickly - hence the volume of releases you see me release. It also helps me to reach a break even point on the CDs I release quicker, and at a lower level of sales. This in effect helps the bands get "royalty payments" faster too (more below!) Secondly, by paying for their own recording, this means by law that the sound recording is the bands property, and not the label's. This means that the band keeps complete ownership of their songs / recordings, something I think is very important. I hate it when labels try and make a "quick buck" off a band that has gotten more popular after moving elsewhere. I work on the assumption that if a band is happy with how I am doing with their release, then they will continue to give me the rights to repress it, should a repressing be required. The band keeps control of this, and the artwork. This means if at any time the band is not happy with me or the label, then they are free to walk away, with their album, and give it to someone else to release , or put it out themselves. The only downside to this is obviously that if a band does go elsewhere then I have no control on what price or with whom the record is reissued with. So, not that this would ever happen in a million years, but if SCARPER! signed to EMI for mega money then I would have no say in Remains and crew reissuing it on EMI and it appearing in the racks of HMV for £15.99 or whatever. So that is the only gamble I take, and to be honest, knowing the bands at the level I do, both as (I would hope) a friend and their label, I think the chances of any of the Boss Tuneage bands walking off to a major label is pretty minimal, to say the least. That is why I will steer clear of bands who I don't think share my same attitude (see Guidance for demos section later on)..other labels prefer not to run the risk of this happening, so they pay for recording to keep hold of all rights, so no one can do that, so I guess you could say I take a risk in that fact, but for the benefits it provides for both the bands and the label, I'm willing to take it.

2.Band Royalties.

Going the major label route, a band usually gets around £1 a CD sold in royalties , but then everything starts to get "recouped" - advertising, promotion, tour support, recording, office overheads, you name it, its deducted! I even know of a couple of bands who even had "paperclips" offset against their royalties! And obviously from the royalties comes out that big fat advance the label has given the band, whilst Mr manager takes his 20% (more on this later!!). About 10 years ago Chris Jones interviewed the three surviving members of THE RUTS for a fanzine I was doing at the time (it later appeared in MRR) and even 10 years on, after having major chart success, in the days when singles and albums used to sell so much more, they were still in debt to Virgin by £26,000. It's the old saying you don't get something for nothing I guess.

So I say fuck all that shit. Bands who are on my label have a couple of ways that I pay them royalties. For bands where they have paid their own recording, every band gets at least 100 free copies of the first pressing of their CD. Then, once I break even (ie recover the costs I have spent not only on the manufacture of the CDs but the postage, shipping, share of advertising etc etc) all "profit" is split 50/50 between me and the bands. The bands gets money that, depending on how well their CD sells, should (with the free copies they get to sell at gigs) go a long way to covering their recording costs. Then, once the CD is repressed, the band again gets 100 free copies, whilst maintaining complete ownership of their recordings. This means I have to speak to the bands and get their permission to repress anything done on this kind of deal. So the band keeps a control on how many CDs I do, and continues to get free copies and a 50/50 split on profits on represses as well. Repressings cost less than initial pressings due to all the origination is done, so the level where the break even point is at is lower - therefore, the more the band sells, the more they get back, and the more I get back to offset against my costs. Sound fair??

Of this profit, my 50% is used to offset losses I have on records that haven't broken even, and also goes towards things like printing of my newsletter and the free CDs I give out to help promote the label....

The alternative to this is where bands have had their recording costs paid by me as well (usually as a multi co-release album, with other labels worldwide, like THE JONES was for example) whereby the bands get set mechanical royalties, which I pay direct to the bands rather than through MCPS (which can take 6-9months from me paying for it to appear with the band) and again offer a 50/50 profit share, although obviously this happens after a far greater number of sales have been achieved as there is obviously higher initial cost involved (recording, manufacture & mechanical royalties)... either method is fair to the bands... and if a band is willing to get out there and really push their record and it sells well, they reap the rewards of their hard effort, and why not??

3.Major Press.

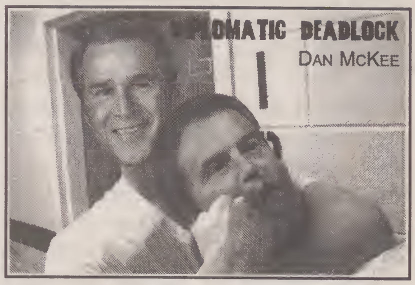
My releases get reviewed by Kerrang. I'm not governed by it however. Getting a good review in Kerrang may help Shellshock a bit when they try and sell the CD into record stores for me, but it doesn't suddenly mean you are getting hundreds or thousands of extra sales. At the end of the day, I treat what Shellshock can sell into record stores for me as a bonus...because I have a good link up with various punk distros and outlets around the world, I work on the premise that hopefully, in most cases, these sales should be enough to at least get to break even point. One particular record I helped distribute through my account with Shellshock managed to get Single Of The Week in Kerrang. HMV and Virgin sat up and indeed did take notice, and the orders from them pushed up the sales of a CD single you would normally expect to sell around 50 to indie stores was pushed up to 350 or so. Great you think... until 2 months later, where 285 of them get returned unsold. So money you have been paid for sales suddenly has to be paid back. So what did getting Single Of The Week in Kerrang really achieve? Not a lot, is the answer. I figure unless the bands you are dealing with are getting interviews and news pieces, etc. then a good review isn't going to rocket your label into the charts!! And you are not going to get the interviews etc. unless you either hire a press agent at £X hundred pounds, or cough up some tasty dosh for advertising. But fair play to Kerrang, at least they did take the trouble to actually review things. I don't even bother sending NME a review copy on anything anymore. I also have a handful of "mainstream" press journos who I send copies to, but at the end of the day, I'd rather send promo copies out to a new punk 'zine that springs up than supplement some journo's salary down at record and Tape Exchange.

4. Guidelines for any bands sending out demos.

If your band sends me a demo, and its come from a management company, your demo goes in the bin. Simple as that. Managers need to get money in the form of advances from any prospective record labels upfront, as they take their cut on this, and that is where they make their money. I don't do cash advances, so I am no use to you! Goodbye! Another important thing is to not lie about how many of your CDR or demo you have sold. Don't try and insult my intelligence by saying your debut CD sold 4000 copies. If it did, you wouldn't be looking for a record label. Don't include press cuttings or reviews from your local paper. It's sad. Don't list your influences as Green Day, Offspring & Slipknot. Don't all wear NOFX t-shirts, except for your bass player who is in a Marilyn Manson shirt. Don't record your demo with Ian Wetherall for that synthetic, over produced punk sound. Don't send glossy pictures of yourself. This may sound a bit harsh, but I am pig fucking sick of receiving demo tapes I have absolutely no interest in from bands / people who obviously have never heard a Boss Tuneage band in their life, but have seen the address on an advert or something and naturally think I am going to love their ska punk band. Honestly, I think in the last 2 years I must have been sent over 200 demos, and I can count the ones I actually liked on two hands (just). Most bands that come to me are on recommendations from other bands on the label, as I think bands can be the best judge - my bands are in effect my A&R people!!

At the end of the day, I am lucky with my label that the fact of the matter is that my day job (working for a CD manufacturing broker) works hand in hand with the label. I get the benefit of cheaper prices through work, which means I can pass on that by selling my CD's slightly cheaper than many other UK punk labels. MY only problem with this is I hope this doesn't give the impression that because the Crackle's, Firefly's and Bombed Out's of this world are slightly higher on mail-order pricing, that they are in some ways ripping off the kids, because they most definitely are not. I just think it's only fair that because I am lucky enough to get CD's a bit cheaper, that I sell them on a bit cheaper too. Also it depends if a label has paid for recording or not... in most instances I don't, so that makes my costs cheaper again.

I would be lying if I didn't say I wouldn't like to do the label full time, and try and make a living off it... that indeed would be my goal one day, but this would have to be done without changing my policies with bands, without increasing my prices, and without ripping people off. I did some vague sums and I figured that I would have to sell at a level where everything I release sells three times as much as it has done before now. So, if two more of you want to buy the Ken Ardley Playboys CD, and send me on my way towards that, It's £5ppd!!



Maybe it's because I'm an American citizen and that first amendment of our constitution has been instilled in me from an early age, or maybe I just love freedom of speech as a student of philosophy, inspired by the Socratic dialogues and the way a good honest and open conversation, even when passing through many areas of confusion and error, can often lead to great revelations and truths? Maybe it just stems from the fact that even from an early age I have had an opinion on everything and have never been afraid to express it? I don't know the exact roots of my reasoning, but I do know that I believe very strongly and always have done, in people being able to say what they want. I don't just believe in it, but I think it is necessary for a free society. An open exchange of ideas and thoughts, opinions, expressions, beliefs, etc, and a continuing dialogue between people as to how they perceive and judge the world and our lives and actions within it is the only way we can ensure that society functions in a true and honest way taking equal consideration of the interests of everyone in it and gathering all the facts and judgements that we have collectively accumulated to try and seek some answers. I truly believe in freedom of speech for everyone, even those I don't agree with, because to censor ideas and opinions is to censor certain areas of thinking and a world without free thought is vulnerable to suffocation, stagnation and a destructive arrogance. It is a world without critique, doomed never to improve its faults or change its harmful ways. Even the most ignorant and stupid racist, sexist, homophobic tripe I personally think should be allowed to be spoken if only so that the more intelligent among us can point out why such garbage is so obviously wrong. It is when we try and gag ideas that they don't become confronted and instead they rot in undisturbed solitude, gaining for some, a forbidden allure. Something that I think is entirely detrimental to free speech and to a free society are UK libel and anti-defamation laws.

I first became aware of these biased and unfair laws with the infamous McLibel trial that saw London activists Helen Steel and David Morris trapped in the longest case in English legal history simply for passing out leaflets about why they were opposed to McDonalds. McDonalds again brought these laws to my attention recently when an article I had written about the McLibel case, requested by my student newspaper last year to explain why there was an annual international Anti-McDonalds Day of Action, was pulled by the university lawyers for fear of possibly facing similar legal problems. McDonalds have gone after all manner of publications from national newspapers to local ones and have been suing anyone for libel if they are spoken about in, potentially libellous unfavourable terms. Even though the things I had written in the piece had all been backed up in court at the McLibel trial, thanks to the heavy deck-stacking of the British laws it was still too much of a gamble for our newspaper to publish it.

More recently, thanks to similar legal threats I have received from a company just for expressing my opinions on some things that happened to me when dealing with them with others I know had also dealt with them as I attempted to see whether my experiences were the norm with that company or just an unfortunate anomaly, both myself and the others I contacted have, in my opinion, been essentially bullied into silence not only about our opinions on something that we feel strongly about, but into even confirming or denying for sure that these opinions we hold about this company are valid because thanks to the threats all avenues of discourse and investigation on the matter become shut, conversation ceases and no definite answers can be found.

The reason libel threats leads to this kind of self-imposed censorship is because in the UK they are totally stacked against the questioning individual in favour of the deep-pocketed companies that they question.

Firstly, in a libel case, the burden of proof lies not with the person libelled...for example, if I am a clothing company and I find out that a group have been distributing leaflets claiming that I use underpaid child-labour to make my garments, if I call libel and take the issue to court, it is not me and my company who have to prove that I don't use child labour and thus clear my good name, instead, bizarrely, the leafleteers have to prove that I do use child labour.

This is all fucked up for obvious reasons. If I don't use child labour, it is a very simple task for me to file a libel suit against my detractors and then show the courts the proof that I use legal, adult workers. I have access to all our employment records, contracts etc, I can easily show a court the vital statistics to clear the smear and prove that the words of the activists were just lies. It is incredibly harder for the group of activists to produce the proof, to the satisfaction of the courts, that the child labour is used. They have to get their information from all manner of secondary sources, including most importantly the very company that is suing them who will have no interest in helping their case! Using a fast-food restaurant for example, if claims are made, say, that my beefburgers are actually made out of a mixture of smelted iron and lead and not cow flesh as advertised, then it is much easier for me to show the court my company's recipe books, cooking manuals, supplier receipts, and sample burgers to clearly show that my burgers are 100% pure dead cattle than for the smelt-slanderers to get the same evidence off of my restaurant to use *against* us and prove their metal-burger claims to be true! (LEGAL NOTE: This is just an imaginary example from off the top of my head used for illustrative purposes and in no way meant to actually accuse any real-life fast-food chains of using anything repugnant in their burgers in real life. As far as I am aware those patties are pure prime cow-carcass killed brutally and bloodily for your eating pleasure and nothing in anyway unappetizing...go veggie folks!).

Sure alleged libellers will have some evidence for their case or else their claims are unsubstantiated madness in the first place, but the people with the most evidence about their own business practices are surely the business themselves, and it is obviously a lot simpler to openly and honestly show from your own substantial records, files and practices that the charges against you are false, than for an outsider to prove beyond reasonable doubt to a court of law that they are true.

The second reason the deck is stacked against the questioning individual is because libel cases are usually the most expensive of all legal ventures...this means it is something most individual people can't afford, whereas a big company can. The very notion of a possible lengthy and costly legal battle is often enough to stop most people from even thinking about saying anything potentially libellous or slanderous, and this means that many genuine concerns about company's business practices are often never raised for fear of the financial repercussions of airing certain views. Libel laws can be used very effectively as censorship by more wealthy companies against poorer individuals simply through perceived and implicit threats without any actual case even having to come before the courts. For example, if I believe a company has done some appalling things, no matter how good my reasons for this belief, if I know that I couldn't possibly afford the costs of a lengthy libel battle then I will keep quiet about my beliefs, no matter how strong, because I just literally can't take the risk that expressing them brings.

The third reason British libel laws are in my opinion just censoring tools for the rich and powerful to silence those who dare speak their opinions about them, is shown clearly in the recent case of Housmans, a bookshop in London. The bookshop is threatened with closure due to a libel case against it. The thing is, it isn't actually the shop that is alleged to have libelled anyone. No. Instead, the shop is faced with court because it distributed issues of an anti-fascist magazine which is alleged to have libelled several people. The reason I find this so offensive is because UK law is so stupid that the radical bookshop can be sued for libel even though the magazine itself that is alleged to contain the libel is not being brought to court! Now, any of us old-fashioned folk who follow that out-dated and quaint tradition called logic, may realise that it is insane that a shop can be charged for distributing supposedly libellous material without anyone having to even prove or disprove that the material claimed to be libellous is in fact libellous or not? But hey, that's the joys of British libel law for you. And what does that mean? Well, it means shops get scared to stock anything that could contain ideas that are too threatening and could land them in trouble and so, these ideas and opinions are shut off from public expression, people get too scared to speak their minds, and true, self-critical and most importantly *necessary* assessment and re-assessment of society is prevented.

This was another reason my university newspaper couldn't afford to take the gamble with publishing my McDonalds piece because, if published, due to the weirdness of UK libel laws, it probably wouldn't be me the author of the piece who would be taken to court, but someone like the newspaper's editor for allowing the piece to be run, or the university itself for allowing the paper to be edited by someone who'd solicit the piece in the first place. Obviously that would mean the end of the newspaper and its legacy of years, so the risk was totally not worth it even though the things I had said were all from McLibel and had already been through and affirmed by the courts! There was still always that vague uncertainty, just due to the track record of McDonalds and others when it comes to potentially libellous comment about them, and although the risk was almost negligible, the piece had to be pulled for that tiny fear of the potential repercussions. And it is exactly things such as this that means those libel laws, not even used, just the very threat of them that underlies the operating systems of our society's discourse, mean that self-censorship often has to be imposed for a lot of people who simply can't afford to mount a case against a mega-corporation both financially and time-wise and thus, can't afford to speak their mind and raise questions and objections that in a decent society would be welcomed as constructive criticisms.

I am not trying to say here that obviously any claim made by someone against a big corporation is by default true, and that all the views libel laws have shut up are valid...but I do believe that legal action is no way of dealing with false allegations or disputed facts about a person or business. The way I see it, if a business or person is being lied about then they can show through discourse and by engaging with their detractors that they are wrong and they can prove they are right. Imagine if, back in '87 when McDonalds is alleged to have started sending legal threats to activists that lead to the eventual extremely costly trial, it had just produced a no bullshit, no PR doublespeak, just pure truth response to the libellous leaflets? Posters could have been put up in every McDonalds franchise across the world with the claims of their detractors and the reasons and proof as to why McDonalds think that these claims are wrong highlighted quite clearly. Instead of doing something honest and open such as that and treating the protesters as human being with opinions that they have a right to express until disproved, the company just acted like bullies and tried shutting the activists up. And of course, the reason for this is because many of the London Greenpeace claims against the company turned out during the court case to be true. Instead of working to change their problematic practices, the company seemingly would rather just try and sweep the problems under the rug by silencing their opposition.

In my opinion libel laws are not working at protecting people from false claims and slander as they are alleged to do, they are simply working at scaring people from speaking their mind against those with more money and better lawyers than them. So what if those opinions expressed are incorrect? Or simply malicious? Prove them wrong instead of taking them to court! Expose the malice and put the facts straight. Transparency, honesty, and openness is a much better way of showing why you think something someone has said has defamed you unjustly than to go through a costly and blatantly unfair court system. I've always believed that if you have nothing to hide then you would take claims that are damaging against you in their stride and show to your naysayers exactly why they are wrong using all the facts you'd have at your disposal about yourself and your business instead of using the courts as a gag. To my mind, only those who have something to be threatened by mere words, opinions and ideas, would attempt to silence those ideas instead of just joining in the dialogue and pointing out where the arguments against them are flawed and until we change the libel laws of this country we will continue having people scared to raise important points, scared to seek truth, and a society that, through fear, doesn't have the necessary vocal checks and balances on itself and its practices that are essential for a better society.

That's it from me this month. To the best of my knowledge the much delayed and long awaited ACADEMY MORTICIANS album "*What Happened*" should (fingers crossed) be out by the time you are reading this on Iron Man Records and Who Killed Culture Records. Go buy it from someplace if you want 12 tracks of awesome weird political pop punk, and if you can't find it then check out the ACADEMY MORTICIANS website at http://www.geocities.com/whokilledculture/1.html which is also the website for my other band BULLET OF DIPLOMACY, and Simon from AM's other band CLUSTERBOMB FAERIES. For info on us all and the new AM album check it out or e-mail me at whokilledculture@yahoo.co.uk to find out everything you need to know. Also e-mail me there if you have anything to say to me regarding anything at all, or write to 86 Kelsey Lane, Balsall Common, Coventry, CV7 7GT, UK. Send a quid and you get a B.O.D demo. Remember, if we all just talked our problems out like mature civilized human beings without need of inane institutions such as courts, and if we weren't afraid to admit it when we were wrong and apologize and change every so often then the world would be such a better place! **DaN, 11/7/02.**

ANDRAS MILLWARD

DIY OR LIE?

A personal, touchy-feely view.

"You're the new revolution, the angst-filled adolescent, you fit the stereotype well." RISE AGAINST, 'Six Ways Til Sunday'.

Here's another slant on it all. To quote, and to agree with, Sean McKee, "major label punk rock is retarded" and I'm confident that plenty of people in this issue of

Fracture will outline quite why this and the wider issues are self-evident. By this point you've probably been briefed pretty well about all the issues. But for those of you who may have read this far and still don¹t get what the fuss is about and still don¹t see that the phrase 'major label punk' is the plainest of oxymorons, together with all its odious implications and connotations, this one¹s for you. It might not be comfortable reading and the most I can do is start asking some questions. If not one of them make you stop and think, then you're lost and, ultimately, punk is lost.

I'm guessing that you¹re probably pretty young, bloody enthusiastic about your punk or whatever punk subgenre you subscribe to - a good start - but let's get one thing straight :

Punk will eventually die because of you.

Yes, DIY punk is dying. Rather than living on its feet, it's dying, slowly and stubbornly, on its knees, as the Zapatistas might have it. Examinations in issues like this are the rearguard actions of a decreasing number of scenesters who are either old enough to remember why punk crawled into existence in the first place or are the rare younger punkers who still seem to possess a brain and the vital spark to keep them involved at a DIY level.

It's your fault directly and indirectly. Indirectly it's your fault by reason of the fact that capitalism is winning all across the world, despite the rearguard actions by anti globalisation organisations and so on. Part of capitalism's victory is turning you into a consumer. Despite setting itself up or continuing to promote itself as an alternative to the mainstream and because of its failure to set up any real alternative workings, punk now runs on exactly the same lines as a capitalist industry.

Working on your all-too human insecurities, you have been turned into a consumer. Desperate to belong, you buy into a lifestyle that's attractive to you but you haven't the imagination to invent yourself or chop, change and adapt. You may kid yourself that you're different, but all you're doing is buying into a different commodity. Lots of punks hate all this subjective, touchy-feely shit unless it's safely compartmentalised in an 'emo' context but this is another reason why punk is dying - it forgot about its own humanity and that gave the capitalist mindset a permanent way in and a conduit for the corporations to begin to suck the life force out of it. They offered it larger and more colourful than before and like the soulless moth that you are, you're drawn irresistibly to it.

Looking around, I'm stunned by the lack of spark or curiosity in punkers. Why are you all content to turn into mindless consumer-punks, told what to do by fewer and increasingly influential 'guides' of all kinds that dominate the scene? My friends and I used to scour 'thanks' lists for the next band to chance our arm on, buy (often appalling, it has to be said) singles and albums by unknown bands on the basis of a comparison with a fave band in reviews in tiny 'zines. We'd buy albums on the strength of t-shirts worn by singers in other bands and some of these bands are now lifelong favourites. When did you last buy a 'zine reviewed in the back of Fracture? When did you last buy a record or CD on the strength of the review only or a mention in another band's interview?

And the other thing that's got me - how short punkers' sense of history has become. There seems to be no real interest in the bands and the people who sweated blood to lay the foundations for the scene today, and in whose histories and example lies the inspiration and know-how to keep punk away from the mainstream of capitalist culture. These guys got serious grief for being a punk or straight-edgers or whatever while you can slip through life pretending to be different with no real hassle from anyone save a few beer boys. Would you endure the beatings the likes of Henry Rollins, Ian Mackaye, Mike Ness and hundreds more got just because they looked different? Read any decent early punk history for an idea of what I¹m talking about: Rollins' own "Get In The Van" is as good a place as any to start.

This is where, taking a slight side step, we begin to come to where it's directly your fault. In the rush to belong to something different at any cost, be it the re-writing of your own and punk's histories or the rush to embrace the new at any cost, you forgot about being a decent human. Desperate to belong and fit in, you turn punk into an exclusive schoolyard. Too harsh? Here's a few scenarios.

When did you last make an effort to talk to a band after a gig rather than stay away cause hell, they're THE BAND and surely I can't talk to them? I looked away and when I looked back the rock star them / us divide between audience and performer had appeared in punk, something which, in my naiveté, I thought punk sought to break down in the first place. And if you're in a band, how often have you tried to be unapproachable just cause you're the band? Don't get me started on bands. As scenesters we are consumers, but as active punk bands there seems to be a shift more and more to the Pop Idol / Pop Stars mentality, that of expecting a break and success and all the mainstream rock star trappings, simply by reason of the fact that you draw breath. See Rollins et al. for how to pay dues.

How often have you ignored or scorned the new kid or the older guy at the gig just cause he wasn't part of your faux-Californian clique or his wallet chain was too short or he wore a strange shirt?

These things may seem trivial but throw them in with everything else and they are coffin nails. I'll rein it all in before I get too carried away. If punk is to survive the brutal onslaught of both capitalist hegemony and the failings of human insecurities and selfishness, you need to wrest control of it back into your own hands. You need to find that spark of independence that lurks somewhere deep within you and make up your own mind about things, regardless of what your friends, peers and idols say, regardless of how this will affect your cool, image, or popularity. You need to find the courage to go out on a limb once in a while; you don't have to face down half a dozen racist skins just yet, but you can start by making your own decisions, some of them rash, about what you want, like and need within the scene.

You need to make punk an all-inclusive place for all the people who genuinely are disaffected from the mainstream (we come in all shapes and sizes) and educate those who come in with mainstream values looking for a quick-fix made-to-measure alternative. That means educating yourself, which in turn will mean never taking the world or what it offers at face value again. It can be hard work but I guarantee that it will change life for the better forever. I'm not asking you to all get together in a group hug, just practice some open-mindedness beyond the stultifying confines of punk political correctness.

You can also tell me that I'm full of shit. I don't expect a sudden change in punk, only its slow, stubborn decline and ultimate absorption into the mainstream capitalist culture, with a few pockets of DIY activity dotted around the cultural landscape. And bands have been singing about the petty crap that happens in the scene from the first 1-2 3-go and I don't expect us to suddenly achieve some kind of enlightenment and achieve the long sought after spirit of unity in the scene.

Yup, tell me I'm full of shit.

But I'd prefer it if you thought hard about this, made a few changes and proved me wrong.

"I Can't Wait to Sell Out" sang **SLOPPY SECONDS,** tongue in cheek. The irony being that neither they nor the other bands I like would even get the chance. Here's why :

1. Most good punk or Oi bands are in their thirties (some even forties!).
2. Finding 4 people to form a band who are this age with no work or family commitments is virtually impossible
3. That means tours, band self promotion, etc. are virtually impossible
4. Which means that to a major label the band are simply not viable.
5. And even if they *were* viable in those respects, they're still fucked because now there is a new obstacle - THE TREND.

Put simply, out of all the Fracture columnists I have the least to worry about. None of the bands I like are blatant clones of either PENNYWISE, OFFSPRING, LESS THAN JAKE, BAD RELIGION, GREEN DAY or NOFX. So they may as well be GARY GLITTER as far as the PR vultures are concerned. The music industry is like a tacky market trader. Every market stall has the same Panasonic batteries, hair clippers, cellotape and gadgets for kids. It's called "playing it safe", but sooner or later everyone is gonna have a hair clipper set. What they gonna do then? Sadly this rule of thumb doesn't seem to apply to the music industry who somehow manage to sell over 100 PENNYWISE's and a 100 NOFX's (and still counting) to the kids without them realising "Hang on a minute, haven't I already got that?". It isn't so much a music industry as a factory line conveyer belt. Sign the contract, put 'em in the studio, release the record and insert which band it sounds like on the press sheet & ads. In my day the majors had BUZZCOCKS, 999, THE PISTOLS, SHAM, UNDERTONES, REZILLOS, THE JAM and so on. Try and think how many other bands blatantly copied any of those You can't can you?

Major labels (and the bands who sign to them) are their own worst enemy. A ten grand advance is probably impossible to turn down if you're kids from a council estate (not that I could imagine any of the NOFX, etc. clones being from there) but, just like pissing a fortnight's giro up the wall, these bands just don't bother to look into the future. All they can see is the money. Fuck the contract, where do I sign? They don't have any idea of the ridiculous clauses (some bands have even deliberately made shit records just to piss off the label so much they'll let em go - until then they are the label's property) or that the amount they give you for recording, etc. all has to be justified in sales. For example if BARSE did an album for Sony (yes I know, but let's pretend) and got £500 for doing it on their 8 track and sold 10,000 that would be fine. But if SLF or whoever spent £4,000 in a top studio and sold 10,000, that would be a disaster, royalties would be withheld, and heads would roll. And their next album would have a budget of £1000, a classified ad in MRR and airplay on Wisconsin college radio night shift.

But by far the worst thing about major labels and the reason that they (and the big indies too) destroy bands is the pressure to tour and record. Who would've thought that THE CLASH would've ended up making "Sandinista", THE BUZZCOCKS would unleash "A Different Kind of Tension", and THE UNDERTONES bore us with "Hypnotised"? Life on the road may sound fun but apart from the actual gig it's almost like being in prison. Stranded in a town with next to no money and nothing to do but take drugs or drink cheap'n'nasty lager. When I go to HITS I come back absolutely shattered, and that's just 3 days. Imagine doing it for weeks, sometimes months, in a van with the same 5 or 6 people, getting no sleep, etc. And then having to start on a new record.

That's why up and coming bands on REAL independent labels will always have the edge. They can gig when they want, record when they want, have hobbies, family, friends, other bands gigs, good nights out and find some inspiration. And they can have their OWN sound too. Now *there's* a novelty.

I also feel sorry for the small labels who initially discovered the bands and spent every spare minute promoting them only for the bigger fish to come and cart them off when the hard work has been done. Some such labels don't even get a thank you on the new Major stars thanks list. And what about the DIY distributors? The people who helped them get known? I'll tell you what. Now the band can shift serious units, the DIY distributor can't even get hold of the product. The shop cartel is now in force so if the punter wants to continue supporting the band, they'll have to go to HMV or some other shithole and pay £14 for a CD. And if only crap shops can get it, it makes sure the price rigging is carried out to the letter. But it's not just the majors, it's the big indies too. People have asked me if I can get DISCHARGE's new CD, as people have been known to pay up to £17 for it. Surprisingly, yes I can. If I set up an account at Pinnacle House and pay (wait for it) £8.95 a throw. I could probably even sell a few at £10 each and make myself £1 a CD, but why, why, why, but why, when (A) I can get independent bands CD's for half the price and still MAKE MORE per CD, and (B) The band never gave a fuck about anyone but themselves so why support them? (Despite being the first person round our way to buy their first few singles, the cunts didn't even reply to me when I sent a SAE, and that's *before* they were famous!)

The best advice to anyone worried about "their" band selling out is *save yourself the bovver.* Because every band who *does* sign to a major are past it anyway. I used to have a BLAGGERS t-shirt, I even wore it in Consett (which in the late 80's was like wearing a Sunderland top in The Bigg Market!), but long before they signed to EMI I'd given up on 'em. Their music had turned arty in a half arsed attempt at mimicking the Manchester dance / Indie scene. I slagged the B Side of one of their records which was as exciting as getting your hair cut, but would they listen to criticism? Would they bollocks. A letter from Matty (singer) slagging me off (worded more like a death threat) appeared in the then biggest punk mag UK RESIST. Soon afterwards they signed to EMI, their bemused fans deserted them, they were dumped, an atrocious single followed on an indie label and Matty died of a drug overdose. So when *your* favourite band stroll starry eyed into the big time, spouting every excuse in the book (when in reality the only reason is MONEY) remember that it'll almost certainly end in tears. And besides, there are always new bands who are a lot better anyway.

Forget the majors. Let's just hope the UK doesn't end up like America where, currently, just about every independent label that's making a profit is signing up to the meglomaniacal MORDAM Empire. Mordam are a huge distributor but despite it's size, it is still paranoid enough to force labels to sign 'exclusive rights' contracts which forbids them selling to, or trading their records with *anyone else!!* Now I know the amount of mundane work that goes into a label, and it must be great to simply be a talent scout rather than a label, giving your entire pressing to someone else to sell, but surely the way Mordam operates is as bad (if not worse than) a major label?

That's why I am inviting Fracture to compile a list of GENUINE independent labels who TRADE and SELL CHEAPLY to DIY distributors - and the punters of course. Possibly make an article similar to the DIY Promoters Guide in past issues, or if it gets out of hand, maybe even a side project like MRR's "Book Your Own Fucking Life". All you would need is each label to answer a few questions -

1. Basic info on the label
2. What styles of punk you offer
3. Current releases and info on 'em, including wholesale rates.
4. Are you looking for more bands, and if so any restrictions on content or style?
5. Contact number/address/phone number/e-mail address/website (if applicable)

With postage being the disgrace that it is, small labels or distributors can't afford to waste stamps contacting labels asking about trade, etc. only to find they're some subdivision of a crap huge label who were never gonna reply anyway. Even if labels would put "AVAILABLE FOR TRADE" when sending review copies, it would help, as reviewers could write "TR" at the end of the review, so the genuine DIY labels know who to (and not to) contact. I hope the Fracture editors take me up on this. It would be one in the eye for those hell bent on monopoly, big business and price rigging, and save a lot of people a lot of time and trouble.

But only YOU can change things, by supporting bands and labels who are serious about their art. Fuck all the big bands with their attitude problems and greed. Fuck all the clones who copy others to try and arse lick their way onto a certain label. Go out there and rediscover the meaning of PUNK again. Get back into swopping tapes. Produce a fanzine (I would say 'start a band' but I wouldn't wish that on my worst enemy!). Support DIY distros and SMALL shops who let you put up gig posters and treat you like a CUSTOMER - *not* the leeches on the high street (the McDonalds of the music industry)... "Welcome Sir, buy this, fuck off" .

Obvious? Predictable? Not to most of those who went out and bought the new DISCHARGE CD.

ENDNOTES.

BARSE 77's new 7" "Council Estate" is available for £3ppd from - T. Howarth, Rosehill, 20 New Front Street, Tanfield Lea, Stanley, Co. Durham, DH9 9LY, UK. It's pure '77 punk with tunes and grit. Fans of BUZZCOCKS and EATER take note. Out soon is the band's 2nd CD which will be £6.00 ppd from the same address.

ID CARDS.

I see they're at it again. Something so 'big brother' even Peter Lilley the mad Tory Hitlerite was shocked! Using the ever topical excuses of Asylum Seekers and Benefit Fraudsters, and with the help of the media, they might even get away with it. After years of crocodile tears over Stephen Lawrence here's a green light for racist coppers to intimidate every 'darkie' in sight. But never mind the Unemployed and Asylum Seekers, *everyone* should feel threatened. Anyone who does *anything* naughty (and that means most of us) and even those whose actions are *legal* (ie. Union reps and Solicitors who are 'too good' at their jobs).

There is something we are not being told about (New) Labour. How come a rich Tory twat who is contrary to everything the Labour Party stood for (pre 1997) was able to rise to the highest levels in the party and managed to take with him several other right wing extremists, so that, in only 5 years, we have *no* Labour Party and *two* Tory Parties? After reading Jon Ronson's book ("Them") I find it very likely that this scenario was created by an establishment coalition of media tycoons, the security services, and the rich and powerful. And ID Cards are one of the final pieces in the jigsaw. Make sure you fight 'em in every way possible. It ain't just the blacks they're after, it ain't just the unemployed. It's ANYONE who isn't content to lick the bosses arse in a Minimum Wage job, watch shit television and repeat like a half-witted parrot all the ruling class' lies in the gutter press.

GARETH HALLAM

DIY OR LIE?

When I heard about this edition of Fracture concentrating on the DIY Ethics of Punk Rock a sense of urgency took over me, that an infuse some form of analysis of what punk is, and what it's current medium has become; it will be The Realisation and Suppression of Punk Rock.

Punk is political. And I can not stress this enough. Punk in the UK, be it sXe, hardcore, Cider Chaos, Emo and all other's under the umbrella term Punk, is no longer political. Therefore it is important to look at the word 'political', and see where we can go from here, in order to transform this community. Politics and political are normally a language and an image we associate with progress-worshipping-suit-wearing question-avioding-sado-masochism practicing authoritarian that control our lives, and every 4 years we get our 'chance' to change the outcome of each day. (The General Election). But, why do we give them the power to make decisions on behalf of us, is this really in your own interest? What all the controllers of our lives seek to do is intellectually privatise thoughts, in that, all decisions they make will be in a universalised best interest of the population. (60million decisions made for all of our own best interests and needs; somewhat an impossibility, and blatantly shows the poverty of representative democracy). But what does politics do for you if you see yourself as 'political'?

Well, firsthand, you have successfully undermined, all so called political leaders, and specialists. (These include MP's, the authoritarian left - forms of Marxism, Communism - and all Rightists - neo-conservative, fascist, etc.) You have now given yourself a 'tool'. This 'tool' gives you a opportunity to analyse your position within mass society, as a worker / consumer / artist / student, etc. Why could this be beneficial?

The advantageous position you are know in, is now called a process of deconstruction and interaction. If we use the notion of everything is not what it seems, then there has to a be a cause summing up to a totality to why things are the way they are. The word to describe this is 'reification'. It is when we take an abstract form such as authority or time, and deal with them as concrete reality. It is unquestioned assumptions in our lives that we therefore have to deconstruct; similar to peeling layers off an onion. Once we begin to deconstruct the ways in which the human species operates, we then begin to interact within the world in a much less alienated manner, and begin to abolish all the reified parts of how our lives (and lets face it they are) are manipulated and controlled. Is it not you who has poverty of genuine human interaction? It's not that you want to save the world (from what?), but you want to be able to transform you're environment that creates lack of life in the first place? How do we communicate and support between ourselves? And what stop's us interacting as we desire?

Punk rock has lost it's political inheritance, and therefore it has lost it's urgency. Urgency can mean passion, a passion that allows us to be angry, depressed and fighting against alienation, and let's be up-front, punk is the noise and representation of our subsequent despair? But, if we do not know what we are angry about, then all punk is, is a sub-culture. If it is a sub-culture, then our culture just becomes yet another way to consume, but as opposed to everyday high street comestibles. We therefore see only things and their prices, that is what the state of our lives has become. If we challenge punk rock towards an overtly-political form, then we kill the punk consumer, and we become or at least are on a path towards a counter culture, that creates resistance to the existing social order, that right now is the dominant culture of capitalism. Ask yourself the question, do you consume records? Why do you consume them, do they interest you, do they fulfil you as much as a genuine moment in life does? Do they show you second-hand desire, or do they challenge you because of what their content and function? Remember under contemporary (and hopefully) late-capitalism, we are all a 'target audience', and especially if you see punk as 'rebellious' culture, then you have to expect that companies cash in on our rebellious impulses to keep the wheels of commerce turning. The autonomous movement of capital will sell you back the products you have just rebelled against. How many records shall we buy, and do these records make you feel 'happy'; if not then, does this then say something about the whole of capitalism, in that a consumable item gives you nothing, therefore what was the point in consuming it in the first place? And to question further, the band that recorded the music, did you make your art as a way of challenging yourself and the audience or did you create your art as your role as yet another 'suffering artist'? And if punk has not yet given you what you wanted, then what can you do to challenge punk rock in order to give you what you need?

So what is useful about punk rock? Punk is inherently political and revolutionary; this is it's deepest and most easily accepted attributes. In order for punk rock to be revolutionary, it has to be aware that it should dissolve at any sign of a real revolution, otherwise it would not be revolutionary, would it? Punk rock allows you to exist beneath and away from all the pre-assigned .roles that perpetuate civilisation; everyone in 'their' world is an office worker, a business woman, a careerist, an academic, they suffer at the machine they themselves have built. No longer is the man expected to be 'angry', the punk rock woman can get behind a microphone and be angry (perhaps she has even more to be angry about - patriarchal civilisation for example?). When we desire something to say, we say it, we don't go through subscribed channels of media institutions, for example take zines. '...[it] is a political deed, you don't ask, or demand your right to speak, but you take it...' ([Re]fuse fanzine #2). We don't have to wear the right clothes that we have all policed each other into wearing. But punk's most important entity is that it is a DIY culture.

We have decided to take control of our lives. We have decided to think and practice ways of living that counter to what politicians, leftists in general and other authoritarians coerce us into doing. The ethics (ideas of how we could live in the their practice) of DIY are anti-capitalist, in that we do not wish to commodity music, and do our best not to turn the DIY community into one that allows capitalism to creep into it and turn our emotions to 'a thing' that will set market demands. We will have to fight against mega-corporate rock, that are only interested in the labour of the artist, in order to create further wealth. And, it can already be seen, with labels such as Victory, Revelation, Epitaph, etc. They are not interested in anything else except the creation of profit. To fight against them, and with the correct understanding we will be un compromised towards late-capitalism. But what about a radical band, within a mega label? (e.g. Refused, International Noise Conspiracy, Rage Against the Machine, Boy Sets Fire), 'aren't they subverting the social order?'. Well, yes and no. Some of those bands criticise themselves in their situation, and actively encourage the audience to question the role of artists, and the band as an authority and thus specialists of political theory. But, imagine for a moment; if the band that immersed you in punk, and all the other same bands, had put 'work' into expanding the underground networks of decentralised cells of DIY counter-culture ethics, instead of following footsteps of the rock stars before them, the 'underground' would be efficient enough to work well enough that we wouldn't have to use those motherfucking channels ever again.

If punk rock, is therefore an alternative way of living, and can accommodate ourselves to escape gender roles and to live without capitalising and capitulating social relationships, then where next? In order for politics to be effective, it must come into conflict with society, of course, we should challenge ourselves, challenge relationships in order for us to be fulfilled, and this involves a community that debates, defines itself as radical in everyday life, and enthuses about creating a counter-culture that dissolves all sub-cultures. What role does the music we play ,and listen to, if you witnessed yourself as someone who subscribed to radical thought, in what way would you think about music? There has been a space that has been created by DIY communities and actions, this now gives you the opportunity to critically analyse your own life as a victim in the civilised and capitalist orientated world. If we really care about the potential for transformation of our lives, then we should really show the integrity that punk should not be sold out to capitalism.

The Great Refusal - PO Box 1251,
Hunters Bar, Sheffield, S11 8XG, UK.
fifteen_counts@yahoo.co.uk

Trust Me...
Steve Scanner

A themed issue on why DIY is cool and major labels are crap. The answer should be clear to all - DIY *is* the way to go. I think that is something we all primarily agree upon - but is it quite as cut and dried as that?

Adapting an old - but infamous - George Orwellian quote, *"Four legs = Good, Two legs = Bad"*, Orwell's words of animal autonomy can be applied here to read:- *"DIY & independence = Good, Major label & mainstream intervention = Bad".* Like the original citation from 'Animal Farm' which had additional provisos applied to its composition the more it was analysed, so too can the initially clear and palpable rhetoric of the corporate-hating, pro-DIY, anti-establishmentarian Punk Rocker.

In a fabled ideal world, the community known as Punk and Hardcore would exist outside of all corporate and mainstream influence. Punk, by its very nature, is uncompromising. It's suspicious. It's questioning. It casts an ever-circumspect eye over any outsiders who suddenly appear offering bounteous rewards and interminable promises. These are all traits which the mainstream major labels dislike and more importantly, don't understand.

Punk has constructed its very own infrastructure of labels, promoters, collectives, distributors, zines and individuals who work extremely hard because they believe - *really fucking BELIEVE* - in this thing we call Punk and Hardcore. What these individuals have constructed is a disparate society, operating within a larger society, which is self-sustaining, self-promoting and self-reliant via an international network of contacts. These qualities form a set of traits that major labels can never possibly hope to comprehend or break into.

This is not a Utopian Dream - this is reality. When that is considered, a solitary question remains:- *"Why would any band wish to leave our beloved, secular world for the land of rape and money that is the alleged mainstream/major label world?"* After having total control over their sound, their destiny, their product - why would any band relinquish it all and put their future into the hands of money-makers who get no closer to a Punk Rock Show than they do to mud-wrestling alligators?

But this is not an ideal world...

A brief look at history only rams home the futility of that aforementioned question even harder. Of bands that have crossed over, most have been screwed by those fat cats with the cheque book and pen offering five album recording contracts and stadium tours. SAMIAM, who signed to Atlantic, found themselves dropped after the recording of their second major label album. Not only that, the label refused to release 'You Are Freaking Me Out' and denied it access to any other label wishing to release it until recording costs had been reimbursed. That's just one example from one band. Consider also bands like SENSEFIELD, SCHLEPROCK, FACE TO FACE - the list can go on ad infinitum.

Yet, a few bands / cases have crossed over with their dignity retained, and therefore command an equal amount of respect from their fan-base as they did prior to selling their souls to the proverbial devil in the CEO's chair at "WeGotchaByTheBalls Records Ltd:". Two that instantly spring to mind are SOCIAL DISTORTION - who have long had ties with Sony - and HUSKER DU who released their final two albums on Warner Bros.

Why is their dignity intact? Well, at the time at which the crossover took place it was a different era - an era pre-empting MTV (especially in HUSKER's case) and most importantly, it was prior to the mass commercialisation and desensitisation of Punk Rock - itself brought about by the major labels wanting to make money out of something already doing very well for itself on its own terms. Secondly, neither band really compromised their sound or lyrical objective in anyway. I'm old enough to remember the furore surrounding HUSKER DU jumping ship from SST and thought their big league debut - 'Candy Apple Grey' - was gonna sound like the devil incarnate, or worse, a U2 record!! Fact is, it sounded like 'Flip Your Wig' with better production. Both bands crossed over at a time which was right for them and played the major labels on the band's own terms. As did JAWBOX who had approval of all their own press kits, ads etc included in their contract when they signed to Atlantic. Furthermore, they owned the right to release vinyl versions of their records via their own label, De Soto.

But these examples are few and far between. These bands do not set the precedent for mainstream crossover, they represent the exception. Those who have crossed over with a degree of dignity (even though it may have been a contributing factor toward the eventual downfall of the bands in question) are often used by those who jump ship for no other reason than the expectation of global fame, a nose full of meths, groupies on call and financial fortune.

What so many fail to realise is the fact that major labels don't give a damn about *bands*. Majors are not interested in a band for their strength as a musical unit or as a team of exciting songwriters. They are not interested in the band which will make a record that could be deemed a classic in ten years time. Instead, they are only interested in what profits - and profits greatly - in terms of sales juxtaposed against recording costs. You could also speculate whether major labels have EVER been interested in such qualities.

Nor are they interested in enhancing a sub-culture that has its own way of life; its own doctrines; its own paradigms; its own morals. Their failure to visualise that Punk and Hardcore represent more than just music, clothes, or an appearance on the Van's Warped Tour Stage at the Reading Festival is yet more evidence to question their intrusion into the world of Punk. For those who have embraced Punk wholeheartedly - crass as it may sound - Punk IS a way of life.

The majors want a sellable package. They require a 'marketable commodity' in the form of a body of people who can record easily accessible music which will shift vast quantities to a catatonic MTV generation. A Punk band on a major label (an paradoxical situation today if I ever heard one!) has to be a band which will look good in a video and who will not say anything inflammatory when they appear on Saturday Morning children's TV while also portraying a loveable, cheeky sense of good-natured danger, and who will gladly do what they are told because they are a 'marketable commodity'. They have to compromise at all costs for the sake of the dirty dollar. Basically, they are required to be an investment - NOT a band.

But let's consider a bigger picture. Most reading this publication will be more than aware of the evils of the majors. What Fracture represents - along with a multitude of other, smaller zines - is the pinnacle of a belief grounded in honesty, sincerity and a genuine love for Punk Rock and all its sub-genres. Independent publications need not pander to any label or press person because they are not doing this for free records, invites to post-tour parties, back-handers or any other rock 'n' roll shite of that nature. They do it to get the message out there, to inform, to tell it like it is.

Unlike Kerrang!

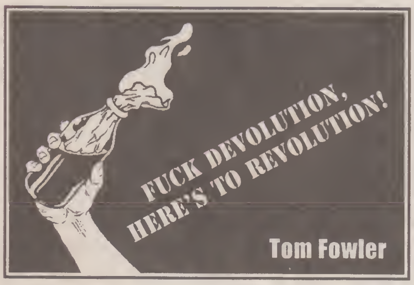
Kerrang seems to think it fitting to place a band of hardworking individuals, who play inspirational, raging music with a biting political edge and have remained loyal to an independent label (CAPDOWN) adjacent to say nothing, freak-your-parents-out, corporate shit (Slipknot). Just what was this glossy W.H. Smith stocked, barcoded slab of gratuitous back-slapping promoting prior to GREEN DAY/OFFSPRING breaking? Can anyone remember, much less care? I'll help you out - bands doing 10 minute guitar solos visually resembling ageing transvestites in spandex. If my memory serves me - the only regard they had for Punk was negative. In fact, derogatory to the extreme. Why did they do it? Because the poodle-haired bands sold issues with a ferocious zeal and Punk was but a freak show of no marketable potential. Now - it's a different matter. BLINK 18Turd on Kerrang TV, OFFSPRING stadium tours - just like a major label - they smell the quick buck! It makes me sick.

Trust me, the power of words should not be taken for granted. We - those active within the free independent press who do this for love and NOT for a wage packet - are in a very influential position. This includes every zinester, every columnist, every minor contributor. The words that we write, that end up in print for public consumption, have the power to change people's ideals, opinions and even lives.

If we're honest, no one likes a snob - be that musical or otherwise. Overtly vociferous absolutism in favour of DIY - while correct on every level - is NOT always the way to go. We shouldn't be so quick to dogmatically chastise and ridicule the 'kids' (an incredibly patronising piece of terminology itself) who sport BLINK and OFFSPRING shirts. That kinda disregard for their own personal preferences can be as off-putting to them as mainstream whoremongering is to us. Let's nurture and influence others in the direction of the independent DIY scene.

Major labels and the mainstream do not furnish the Punk and Hardcore scene with any favours or supplementary positives. They have created divides, caused bands to split up (and reform in a few notable cases!) and generally hindered rather than helped. The world of DIY is far more exciting on every level and it is open to all. It is not - and hopefully never will be a - a closed shop. What is to be found in the world of DIY is dedication. Those who are there for a quick buck are soon flushed out and those who remain want to welcome new eyes, new ears, new ideas - traits that the mainstream has always attempted - and will continue to attempt - to suppress.

Steve Scanner (Scanzine@aol.com)



As far as I remember there is meant to be some sort of theme to this issue something about DIY vs. mainstream punk. Well I'm quite adamant on this issue, I don't buy from ANY multinationals if I can help it and for a large part of the time I don't buy anything at all. My criticism of major labels is entirely to do with what the parent companies are involved with on an international scale and their business ethics rather than to do with their promotion of punk-lite music (which to be honest also pisses me off - just not to so great an extent). I often hear the arguments that groups like Rage against the Machine and The Levellers have done more to promote radical ideas and dissident action than a dozen HARUM SCARUM's or INNER TERRESTRIALS. Thankfully I prefer the latter bands, but aside from that it's no good telling people about the horrors of the capitalist system whilst making money for the same bastards you claim to despise. Because for one, people don't listen to you. People who do soon either see the hypocrisy for what it is and become disillusioned by these bands claim and also the ideals they claim to represent or don't realise that being anti-capitalist and a capitalist product are mutually exclusive things. I know there's a lot more to punk rock than politically motivated bands but I'm not really interested in them.

To be honest all this Blink 182 / Green Day / etc. stuff has always left me cold and generally strikes me as American college rock. I'm sure someone disagrees with me on this but I'm not especially interested, and anyway with CD-R's and MP3's why pay for them? Sure I still buy punk records but thanks to a few mates I never have to buy reggae records again. I'll leave it there before I mention CHUMBAWAMBA...

DIY Politics.

The more important area of the DIY ethic to me at least is how we run our lives and as such DIY politics, one of the most inspiring things about the radical movement today, is its tradition of direct action and grass-roots organisation. However, whenever people resist the way in which the world or people are being abused there is always a bunch of would-be leaders who come along and try desperately to hop on the bandwagon and install themselves as the spokesmen for the movement. Many people have argued that the involvement of left-wing political parties in anti-capitalist and ecological activism is a good thing. I myself am forced to disagree. Groups like the Socialist Worker's Party (SWP) do a great job of promoting themselves within the radical movement and making sure that their politics are at the front of any activity. The setting up of front groups especially 'globalise resistance' has done little more than act as a way of pushing SWP spokespeople into the media off the back of protests organised by and attended, in the most part, by people who would want little to do with their authoritarian polices and their top-down approach to political activism.

There have been signs of the activity of Socialist groups, most notably the SWP (though there are others) at nearly every anti-capitalist event in Europe. Ever since they so massively missed-the-boat with June 18th's carnival against capitalism in 1999 where, horror of horrors, there were no SWP paper sellers and not one SWP placard in site! It is generally Globalise Resistance (SWP by any other name) who gets people on the telly and it is them who claim any victories that the protest creates, whilst blaming any problems on the activities of 'black bloc hooligans' or 'violent anarchists'. My personal experiences with trying to organise actions with the SWP some time ago left a bitter taste in my mouth and a determination not to waste my time with such people again (foolishly I have, a few times I have again found myself working with assorted socialist types, generally unsuccessfully, or at least unsuccessfully in my eyes). Sparing the details the local SWP branch failed to understand the simple idea of the importance of secrecy when planning illegal acts and promptly fly posted the plan of the action around the streets of Liverpool. This was, I was told 'to attract more people' as it happened no-one new turned up on the day except for half the Liverpool police force (unsurprisingly), as it happened none of the non-SWP people involved in the action turned up either, as we knew that the police were bound to be out in force, so a couple of dozen SWP members all carrying party placards or trying to sell copies of their paper the 'Socialist Worker' (a remarkably dull news-sheet designed to put students off politics from what I can understand).

Wasted day of action, wasted method of action as the police being now fully aware of what we would try and do if we attempted to do the action on another day. Overall, a crap way to present yourself to anyone as a viable political movement. The Socialists however saw their 'picket' as a success as they sold some papers. Whether it was down to complete stupidity or political manoeuvring to discredit the kind of dissent *'they don't approve of'* I don't know, whichever way you look at it however the SWP are a hindrance, they would prefer the whole of the anti-capitalist movement to be nothing more than a lobbying group for the 'left' of the labour party, illustrated by the sabotage of the 'Shut down the Labour conference' last year by co-operating with the police to have anarchists and other militants pointed out and arrested. Because they believed shutting down the conference would be counter productive a nearby protest was better as it would "give encouragement to those in the Labour Party fighting Blair". Reform of the labour party seems the party's most important yet fairly unattainable goal. Of course this is one example of many by the SWP there is their laughable 'downturn theory', their poll tax U-turn, the amazing revisionist view of history, the undermining and dismantling of the original Anti-Nazi League to name but a few. Many anti-authorities take a lot of time documenting the ways in which the SWP are blatantly dodgy, but I won't waste your time with that all I'll say is this, at best the SWP view all other radicals as a little confused and in need of leadership, their leadership.

This to me is the wider political issue, more than however dodgy the SWP may or may not be. The point is in struggle we should seek to find better ways to live and co-exist as human beings, the struggle against the state and international capitalism also has to include taking control of your OWN life, going out and DOING IT FOR YOURSELF. Not taking some supposedly scientific method for reordering society and then telling the world that you are the best placed person to be in charge of this new order. Often these groups act as nothing more than a veachine for youthful rebellion, the sheer number of ex-members of the SWP is overwhelming, most people only last a short time and generally turn their back on radical politics completely afterwards. We all need the information and inspiration of others to effectively combat the problems of the world and to build a better one, but let's make it worth building.

We don't need anyone to tell us how to live our lives, or to tell us how we have to demonstrate, or that we have to sell X number of boring political papers to X number of students. Not only does this road not lead to liberation it does lead to boredom and antipathy. I hope this isn't too negative and I have tried to stay away from a boring rant about how shite the trots are. I'm sure some will call me sectarian, but I'm sorry I cannot agree with the actions, politics and tactics of the authoritarian would-be leaders who are obsessed with defeatist, unimaginative and fairly symbolic protest.

Get *informed* about existing events, of methods for direct action, check out these sources none of these people will want to lead you, but they might tell you something which armed with knowledge will help you lead yourself. Not all of them are great, Freedom can to quite dull on times but its got a lot better lately and I regularly find myself disagreeing with whoever might be writing, but that's the point of being an anarchist innit. Many of the web-sites don't keep up with the 'real' publications - who said the 'net was more efficient!

'**Schnews**' (weekly) send SAE c/o On-the-fiddle, P.O. Box 2600, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 0EF. *www.schnews.org.uk*
'**Freedom**' (fortnightly) A4SAE for sample issue 84b Whitechapel High street, London, E1 7QX. *www.tao.ca/~freedom*
'**Earth First! Action Update**' (monthly) SAE + 50p/donation EF! AU! Dept 29, Beswick Street Manchester M4 7HS. *www.eco-action.org/efau*
'**Resistance**' (monthly) SAE for sample issue AF, PO Box 375, Knaphill, Woking, Surrey, GU21 2X. *flag.blackened.net/af*
'**Class War**' (quarterly) £1.25 for the latest issue "London CW", PO Box 467, London, E8 3QX. *Classwaruk.org*

This is by no means a complete list but does serve as an introduction to DIY politics and include lots of addresses and information about other publications and resources.

Upcoming Events.
Yes things to do in your free time *beyond* drinking yourself to death and going deaf (well there's still plenty of time for that of course...)

On the 28th September there's one of them stop the war affairs against the proposed bombing of Iraq, I'm sure it'll be Hyde Park to Trafalgar square.

On the 29th it's the National Vegan Festival at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, tel. 020 8670 9585, VeganFestival@aol.com

Between 4-6 October there's the Rising Tide UK gathering come climate change conference. 01865 241 097 www.risingtide.org.uk.

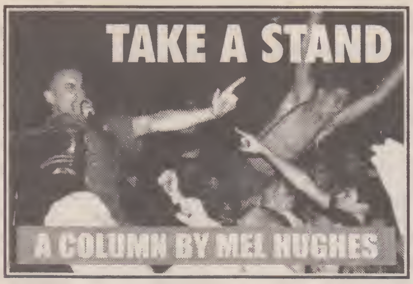
The 16th is the international anti-McDonalds day of action, so adopt your local McDogshite and give 'em hell for a day - leaflets from Veggies 0845 458 9595 www.veggies.org.uk.

Then on the 19th it's the 21st annual Anarchist Bookfair which for the second year is at the Camden Centre in London, www.anarchistbookfair.org.

Laters then people, that's me finished for another time. Sorry about there being no column last issue. I was gonna put my diary for IN THE SHIT's East European tour this May where the van blew up on the first day and we carried on anyway. Bunking the train or cadging lifts off people and borrowing equipment. Met a fella who'd cut his own nose and dick off - he'd escaped from the asylum to come to the gig and destroy the drum kit. Going on long drunken night-time cycle rides though historic European capital cities. Having our lives saved repeatedly by the mighty Daniel Schandmaul (respect is due!). Being assured by Painey that he was 'great at foreign languages' and then heard him say nothing more than 'alright butt' to anyone who wasn't with us except when he tried to speak French to some Germans. Drinking WAY too much Absinthe and Slovak moonshine. Loving the German vegan cuisine. Hating the horrible Czech fare. Took up smoking fags again. Spending 10p on glasses of the best lager in the world. Having members of RED INSECT (great Czech band - check 'em out!) force powerful transparent liquid in a label-less green bottle down our necks. Waking up in the morning covered in bruises some 60 miles away not knowing what had happened for the previous 10 hours. Trying to understand what RED INSECT were acting out to us (they spoke no English and us no Czech). Realising they were telling us we'd been pulled over by the Czech cops the previous night due to our horrifically drunk hired driver and had got into a kick off with them (hence the bruises, that and Flid falling down the stairs). Witnessed Fletch try and buy all the illicit porn and weaponry he could lay his hands on. Tried to repeatedly tell Flid that it was pointless talking so much in-between songs as no-one could understand English – he took no notice of me. Missing marmite, bitter and beans. Having to take a TWENTY-TWO HOUR coach trip in a cramped old bus with no toilet in it which only made two stops the whole journey and showed an old 70's comedy in Czech on an old telly down the front to get home. Generally we had a good time; helping out with the gear was made considerably less taxing when the majority of it was in a lock-up in Belgium for the entire tour, so I had it easy. Mike, the drummer, went and got his feet under the table with a squatterpunk woman so Leipzig now has its very own loud-mouthed stinkin' cwmbranistani waster in residence. I came home to find my housemate had gone mental and gone AWOL, that marmite had been bought up by Unilever (sob!), that I to start gateway to work on Monday morning and I had to give up fags (again). As things went I never did write it all up properly.

I can be contacted c/o Fracture or at buckfast4breakfast@hotmail.com.

Stay Punk, Stay Free!



TAKE A STAND

A COLUMN BY MEL HUGHES

What is DIY and what is not? A term thrown around so much and more often than not loosely connected with things that have no bearing on it what so ever. OK, I'm not here to prance and preen, I'm not here to use fancy words to express my feelings on something that has been more a part of my life longer than anything else, apart from my family. This is something I have lived, continue to do so and for the foreseeable future the only way for me. Without sounding cheesy, this is my passion, my life and I'll be fucked if you money grabbing wankers, fakes, poseurs, parasites and liars intend to use it as a stepping stone to fame and glory. You were never wanted in the first place and that's why the hardcorepunk scene was started in the first place. It sheltered us misfits, where society ridiculed, laughed at us, spat at us, called us faggots, physically assaulted us, treated us contempt, hostility and looked down upon us as if we were less than dirt itself. That my friends, you that care, is part of my life. I have learnt the hard way, hardcorepunk gave me self belief, it gave me friends and more importantly it gave me a voice and the confidence to believe in myself, along with great music the whole thing is priceless.

Although this isn't strictly about hardcorepunk I'll just use it as an example of what capitalist (major, fake indies, major wannabes) labels are all about. The perfect example of this would be the nauseating POP IDOL programme that was on TV. They auditioned the wannabes and thousands of puppets dwindled down to "their" winner. Now there were a lot of stories in the papers about this, the label, etc. It basically boiled down how much they expected to earn and in the shortest time possible. Like as soon as the TV programme was finished the single had to be out as soon as possible in case the viewers lost interest, such as people are, and needed something else to occupy their dreary lives. Then came the tour, the LP and of course they milked as much as possible out of gullible kids with a tour with the other "losers" (losers indeed, the made a mint also and are still popping up on kids TV programmes). More LPs and all the other bullshit such as "official" books and all that goes along with it. I just felt sick about the whole thing, laughed at the nation who were sucked into this whole publicity stunt of a major label, who's only interest is to make as much money in the shortest time possible out of their "artists". I also had a good laugh at the other "stars" that were dropped from their labels this and last year because they weren't earning enough money for the label. Look at Mariah Carey getting paid something like 2 million not to make anymore records as it probably would have cost more just to promote the "sex siren" - their words, most definitely not mine. She was about as sexy as my big toe, not very. Anyway, those major labels make me fucking sick anyway, the whole lot of them. I'll not deny, I like a good tune just as much as the next person. I bought records by The Clash, Pistols, etc. when I first got into punk. You gotta start somewhere. But once I saw them for what they were I decided not to fall for the capitalist dream of major labels and like fuck will I give them my hard earned cash.

Of course I got into the big punk names first such as CRASS, DEAD KENNEDYS, EXPLOITED, SEX PISTOLS. As to an unknown they were the most well known punk bands to a naïve young punk, from the back end of nowhere that didn't really know too much, but had a thirst to know. I bought (stole) records from a local record shop and a local Woolworth chain store. Through the likes of NME and Sounds I got a catalogue from Small Wonder as the ad had bands such as CONFLICT, CRASS, etc. listed. I went to see DEPRAVED (utterly fantastic band who released two LPs under this name, changed their name to VISIONS OF CHANGE and released another two LPs), who played at the old labour club in Belfast, I don't know if this was late 1985 or early '86. I bought some zines and found addresses of tape labels, zine distros and record distros such as C.O.R. That in a short paragraph is how I came to find out about the world wide hardcorepunk scene, that opened my eyes, blew my mind and has been addictive to me ever since. By the time you read this I'll be 34 and I can't see any other way for things to be.

What is selling out and what is not? Do people not care about bands selling out? Well it may surprise you, but of course people do, especially us die-hard DIY crew. But this thing is, if you've been involved and participated as long as we have, we have seen so many trends come and go. There have been so many fickle bands that have used the scene as nothing more than a stepping stone to their five minutes of fame and glory. We lived through CROSSOVER, GRINDCORE, BRITCORE, GRUNGE, NYHC, MOSH METAL, NU METAL and now the big thing in the media is EMO. I'm sure there's lots of other "media terms", but like the cave man I am the mainstream media means absolutely nothing to me, especially the fickle music industry. Do you expect us to fucking cry when another band sells out, in order to sell more records and give exposure to the scene. No we fucking will not. Of course the bullshit of the media bitz, rock stars etc. need a good seeing to, but we have more important things to do supporting and documenting the true DIY hardcore punk scene.

As a fan of music in general, I look at rock music and hardcore punk on completely different levels. Rock music is rock bands feeding the music biz, whereas hardcorepunk is me, it's in my blood. I rarely switch off from hardcorepunk, be it a good thing or a bad thing. It me being a part of something, that does mean a lot to me. It doesn't necessarily mean that I'm always actively doing something hardcorepunk, quite the contrary these days. This could mean anything from buying stuff from DIY distros, reading zines, humming tunes to myself while I'm driving my car to work or discussing thoughts and views that are important to me.

We are all part of the wider story. I'm a fan, so when I buy from distros my money is going back into the scene. Any money I've made from my zine, etc. went back into funding the next issue. So by doing this we are keeping the ball rolling so more projects to be brought to life. This is important, because labels, zines, etc. have to make back their initial input and a little bit more to fund the next project. I find absolutely nothing wrong with bands making money off their music, as long as we the fans are not being ripped off. This is the year 2002 and it's not really feasible to expect gigs for £3 or less. For a good band, this being hardcorepunk and I don't mean professional, nor do I mean shit - I am more than willing to pay a fair entrance fee. Especially if they travelled some distance to grace the stage of Giros (autonomous venue in Belfast), and if they feel as if we care then it will help them on their journey and hopefully they'll want to play again. I mean, us kids really appreciate all the bands that have made the effort to play in Ireland. Not many do, but hey, how many bands miss out the UK too? Who's fault is that? Support the fucking scene, instead of belittling it or scrounging off those who have as little as your self.

What does the UK need? Regular venues, for touring and home grown bands can play enough gigs so all the punkers can get to see them. Where the tours are organised and promoted by the likes of us. A huge distro, something along the lines of Ebullition, with people working on it full time so you don't have to wait aeons for your order and know that you will actually receive something. Another note is, OK we have a couple of free national zines. But support the little folks who beavers away doing their zines, who have to charge (god forbid) for them. Although I have never been in it, a record shop like Out Of Step in Leeds sounds pretty cool, we need at least one in each of the major cities in the UK. The only real punk record store I was ever in was in Vienna and it just smelt and felt fucking lovely. Off course I bought stacks of stuff and Tibi the owner trusted me until I returned from my trip to send him over the money. Now that is punk rock.

Yeah, we do live in a capitalist society and have to interact in order to survive, be it for food, clothing etc. But the likes of music, you do have a choice as a consumer and you'll survive alright if you never buy a record, cd in your entire life. You do have a choice though and at the end of the day, are you going to give your money to some bastard that doesn't even care about you or you gonna used it to help cool DIY hardcorepunk labels/bands/zines? I know where my money is going, what you do with yours is your choice.

Through out the years my attitude has remained pretty much intact for all things DIY, I'm a realist and that is something that cannot be taken away from you, and me who strive to continue something that was introduced to us because it's what we genuinely believe in. DIY is not a musical style, it's a fucking attitude.

So no, none of those bands on rotation on MTV are punk, hardcore or whatever in my eyes. MTV is only entertainment. If a band signs to a major label, then what? Well, one thing is for sure, proven time and time again, they just become nothing more than puppet rock bands. They say they sign to express their views to a wider audience. Well I've never seen it happen and they just turn into everything they were against, or were they? If they don't sell enough records then they'll get dropped. A band should use it's influence. A band like Fugazi, I know they are on their own label, but they know they are popular, but they are not the donkey who followed the dangling carrot. If the music biz wants to play with Fugazi, they have to do on Fugazi's terms, not their own. That is what bands who sign to majors should be doing, yet they don't.

If you don't play all ages, don't do zine interviews, charge rip off prices for your music, merch, gigs, then you don't care. There's countless bands surviving without ripping people off. I don't care about bands on MTV I care about hardcorepunk. I could list names, but what's the point, trends come and go and I'm still here. Will you be?

Anyway, I could go on and on, opening one can of worms after another. I'm certainly intriged at to what the other columnists will have to say on this. As Jerry Springer would say, take care of yourself and eachother.

Mel Hughes, PO Box 36, Armagh, BT60 3PQ, Northern Ireland.
E-mail : barcod@freenetname.co.uk
Write for my list of video and audio tapes, lots of classic stuff. Any traders out there?

Sweet Deals on Surgery

by Dr Graham

Well, here we go... a column on that cliché of clichés: "selling out." I can't help but always be reminded of the 'witch hunt' scene in Monty Python and the Holy Grail whenever people start shouting 'sellout'. A crowd of idiots shouting "Burn her! She's a witch!" at poor Connie Booth dressed up with a false nose and a wart. And, as we all know, some of the most loveable idiots in the world are here in our very own punkrock-hardcorescene...

Firstly, it's probably important to come up with some sort of definition as to what selling out is and in my opinion, for what it's worth, I subscribe to the following train of thought : *selling out is taking a course of action contrary to that which your personal ethics would usually allow*. The important word there is 'your'. The only person who can dictate the line, the crossing over of which takes you off to Selloutsville, is yourself.

Of course, this doesn't stop other people from donning their punk rock klan robes, pointing out the 'offender' for all to see with the aid of a "Fuck <insert band / label / scenester name here>!" post on the Fracture Forum (the modern day, independent music equivalent of a burning cross in your back garden) and rallying everyone together to oust the 'sellout', replete with hardcore style fists in the air and much finger wagging. Hell, I've taken a few pot-shots recently myself on behalf of my own band, but thankfully enough the accusations were all debunked with comments from people who personally know me. There seems to be quite a pattern there, actually. The kids who shout the loudest are usually the ones who know very little about the 'sellout' in question.

The bottom line is that, whilst it's pretty much agreed upon by all that the mainstream music industry is primarily concerned with popularity and money making, if a band from our little underground scene happens to have a sniff of popularity or make themselves some money it does not immediately equate to them having 'sold out'. There's far, far more issues involved and it's rarely black and white. If a band's endeavours are drastically different to the ethics which they propose to follow, then people are well within' their rights to personally reserve their judgements and to have an opinion. Some people take it to extremes and decide it's their mission to expose their new-found enemies' actions to as many people as possible, but to be honest I'm usually happy enough to think, "Well, that's not a choice I would make, but if they're comfortable doing it, then good luck to them." That seems pretty sensible to me.

A favourite lyric of mine, one that I feel sums up the human condition pretty well, is: "A million people died today and all we talk about's the fucking weather." Obviously, the subject of selling out isn't quite the same as meteorological issues, but the sentiment is there. People love to distract themselves from matters of genuine importance by immersing themselves in petty crusades revolving around the actions of other people whom they know very little about. I don't know if anyone else has noticed, but there's quite a power struggle going on with the nations of the world right now with most of the concerned parties having the technology and the lunacy to use nuclear weapons of mass destruction. I'm pretty sure most of us won't give a squirt of piss who's selling out when the whole world is on fucking fire and napalm is raining from the skies.

Then again, what do I know anyway? I'm a sellout too. I write for Fracture Magazine. It has a glossy cover.

The BLOCKO / EIGHTY SIX split 7" is out now on the thickest pink vinyl you will ever come across and people seem to be liking it. Its very satisfying, actually, to see the finished thing, considering the artwork started out as a scribble done at my desk at work. I'm currently in the middle of quite a few artistic endeavours and if you're interested in having me either draw some kind of design for your band or label or if you're interested in having a custom tattoo design drawn up, just drop me a line. Cheers for the emails I've had concerning the last issue - keep 'em coming, it's nice to make new friends... **doc@geek86.freeserve.co.uk**

TRIAL BY FIRE
Graham Sleightholme

Right then folks, here we go again with another load of old ranting and tour dates for you. 1st up did you witness the awesome power that was the DS-13 and BOXED IN tour? Both these bands are cream of the crop in the field of DIY thrash, and proved it in no uncertain terms. Look out for a new 7" for BOXED IN on BUSTED HEAD RECORDS in the future. Good going on Nick / Boxed in, for breaking his collarbone after the 2nd gig but still soldiering on. Your erstwhile reporter got a cracked rib for his troubles. Thrash life never stops as some one once said.

Here's a run down of a few tour dates for you; please feel free to send me dates for upcoming tours in the future, of a thrash/extreme nature. Remember people; please get in touch with the relevant venues/promoters before travelling. Things change. That's life.

PG.99 (U$A) + THE DEVILS
Info; infinitemonkey666@hotmail.com
25th Sept - Southampton, King Alfred
26th Sept - Norwich, Ferryboat
27th Sept - Glasgow, 13th Note
28th Sept - Bradford, 1in12
29th Sept - London, The Swan
30th Sept - Margate, The Lido

VITAMIN X (Holland) – ®october. Awesome Dutch hardcore thrash. If they can match the records this should be a beauty. Check their new LP out on Havoc!
Oct 3rd -Belfast
Oct 4th - Dublin
Oct 5th - travel
Oct 6th -Bradford Festival
Oct 7th - Leeds
Oct 8th - Newcastle, tbc
Oct 9th - Glasgow
Oct 10th - Notts, nearly confirmed
Oct 11th - Bristol – Duke of York
(with WASTED)
Oct 12th - Southampton, King Alfred
(with WASTED)
Oct 13th -London
(possibly with WASTED)

MANIFESTO JUKEBOX
Oct 22nd - Peterborough, The Boys Head
Oct 23rd - Brighton, Freebutt
Oct 24th - (tbc)
Oct 25th - Leeds, Fenton
Oct 26th - London, The Verge
Oct 27th - Bristol (tbc)
Oct 28th - Southampton, King Alfred

Old Man Kilvo is having a do in Leeds check this out - Fast Fest #1 5th, 6th & 7th October with Reaching Forward (Hol), Vitamin X (Hol), Year Of Our Lord (USA - tbc), Wasted (Fin), Narcosis, The Horror, The Sex Maniacs, Pilger, Parade Of Enemies, Thirty Seconds Until Armageddon, Dumbstruck (tbc), The Great Refusal, The Last Chance, Driven Down (tbc), Boxed In (tbc)... Surely fest of the year if it all comes together.

On the record front there's a few things out recently which if you like ear damage you should be seeking out. The E-150 / Zanussi split will no doubt crush all in it's path. will get you one. Also the new DAGDA LP is a stormer, metallic hardcore power all the way. Check the enslaved kids for more details. The BOXED IN 7" is out by some fools at crime scene apparently it's BGK meets RIPCORD mail me at to get one. We also do a distro so if you like harsh thrash and punk drop us a line and we'll add you to our email list. We'll be doing a DAGDA / SCATHA split when the artwork is finally sorted! There's a PARADE OF ENEMIES / SOON THE DARKNESS split 7" out. POEnemies are classy thrash from Southampton and really impressive. Skip the other side tho'. Not sure who put that one out. There's a SEND MORE PARAMEDICS demo out. Leeds based SLAYER inspired zombiecore! D-RAIL should put something out as they blew me away at the 1in12 fest, reminds me of JR EWING a bit! NARCOSIS has an LP out which Balowski in Holland out. One of the finest bands in the land. Totally mental grinding power. The SHANK LP has been out a while and has finally made it to these shores. If you like grind you'll like this. DUMBSTRUCK have a load of recordings done for split with HAYMAKER and Y, which should prove interesting. Deranged in Canada is also re-pressing their 1st 7" from a few years back. As per normal nothing much going on in London that I know of apart from NAILBITER who've done some splits. DEAD INSIDE are still about but should play more as the records ain't that memorable. HELVIS have a CD out which is really impressive (see review this issue).

Aside from that, there's not a great deal else on the thrash front that I can think of. So apart from the Gig listings, the theme for us Fracture Columnists this time is the whole DIY vs. Exclusive Distribution debate (not quite, but you're half way there! - Monk). As far as I'm concerned if you don't want to get your hands dirty and do it the DIY way then fair do's but as Sned says "All the glory and none of the Graft". Do you want a real alternative to the music business or do you want our scene to mirror it and become absorbed by it? All these exclusively distro'd labels should stop pretending they're DIY, and using the underground network to score cred. Points. So within the world of punk / hardcore what ever you want to call it I have noticed over the years that most people I come across are only into "punk" music and nothing else. This is something, which up until several years ago I was guilty of too, but hell, there's a whole other world out there and it's ok to be diverse.

I know it takes a lot of time just to keep up with all things punk (I can't) but don't let that stop you trying new things. Hell, that's what punk is all about. Ok so a few people listen to metal, well a lot to be honest. A few people check out ska but that's pretty much been tied in with punk for years and there's the "daring" that listen to hip-hop, although it tends to be very old hip-hop, which most people who are really into it ditched years ago, sort of like people still listening to '77 bands. Ok you might only like punk and that's fine, I'll hold my hand up and say 75% of my records are punk and that takes up most of my listening time. However I occasionally get caught listening to electro music, kraut rock or 60`s garage which may be shit in your opinion but when did that stop me being punk? What's worse than a musical narrow mindedness is the lack of interest in reading and expanding your knowledge. The Internet does not have all the answers and in my experience has a lot of junk just floating around on it. Why do you think so many people end up on message boards or chat-rooms? Because they can't find anything else! So just one night a week, turn off the TV and computer, and spend some time reading a book, mag, zine, comic whatever just try something that you might not be overly familiar with but might be interested in and if anyone sniggers at your choice of reading (Dickie and the Byzantium empire!) tell them to shut the fuck up. I'm sick of people trying to steer punk towards the rocks and shipwreck us on the island of ignorance. Dress, read, act, listen and be different. Do not accept the punk norm. That's too easy, there's a ghetto of people who will look like they do now for the rest of their lives and they may well genuinely be happy but don't feel pressured into being like them. Take a stand. I don't have all the answers and don't profess to, but I continually re-assess my actions and myself and try to make things more interesting. I feel like a knob pointing the above out but it really is dumb when you go to a gig and you see the little cliques being played out time and again. Ok, there are things below the surface with some of these people and I'm trying not to be judgmental, it's just that punk rock isn't the be all and end all in life.

Ok I'll leave you lot to it. Hope to see you at the above gigs, or on my travels. Get well Pat Evans, Andras and John Mills. Thanks to Dave Monk (patience), Welly, Martin Einon and Welsh Paul for putting up with me and generally being decent bearable humans. Until next time...

Graham / Crime Scene Recs, Box 13, 82 Colston Street, Bristol, BS1 5BB, UK.

"The only completely consistent people are the dead." - Aldous Huxley

My Life With Elvis

TIM MASS MOVEMENT

So it's come down to this. 2002 and we're in the middle of a war, one that's being fought daily on as many fronts as there are borders and checkpoints. You won't hear mortars, won't feel the warm embrace of napalm or have your bones crushed by the shock-wave that the "Daisy Cutter" (registered trade mark of George Dubya and See-I-Slay enterprises) produces when it's dropped on your house or the venue you've booked for a family get together – unless you live in a third world nation with oil interests that don't belong to the Texan conglomerate that has decided the world is theirs for the taking. You won't see the propaganda advertising moral victory in the daily sedation manuals, won't hear "news" reports glorifying triumph after triumph on the "front-line", or see close up photographs of destruction and carnage. Just as there were no American forces in Laos in the 60's and 70's, there is no war – that is, there is no war that you can see, touch, hear or feel, unless you're directly involved or have been personally scarred by it's forward momentum.

This war is about ideology, and is fought via the medium of attrition. There are no short-term battle plans, it was designed to be a long-term campaign with a singular goal in mind. To completely eradicate and then rebuild (using the modern enterprise formula) the entity known as the "Punk Scene". It's "ethical business" cleansing kids, and when they've finished with your favourite bands, favourite zines and favourite labels, they'll be coming for you, and you'd better be ready when they do because they're dam good at what they do. They've been practising their secret art since the birth of the music "industry" and live by a simple code. If it makes money, it's ours, by whatever means necessary. As the mainstream encroaches on the scene, we can either bathe in their corporate dream and gladly accessorise or we can fight back and reclaim what WE BUILT from the ground up. Me? I say bring it on, I refuse to swallow the sugar coated bullshit anymore. Fuck the mainstream, it's D.I.Y (Do It Yourself or Don't Involve Yuppies? The choice is yours...) or die, and if death is the only alternative, then I'm going down fighting every step of the way.

Has it really gone that far, and is there really no going back? I hate to be the one to tell you this kids, but yeah, it has. The mainstream took a bite of the scene, enjoyed the taste and now they want the whole bloody thing – and you know who is really to blame? We are. Each and every one of us for allowing things to go this far. For the misguided belief (although, not everybody was taken in by the hype) that "Hey, a band signing to a Major might be good for the scene – it could kick start things for a few more bands and a few more labels, and it will never have any bearing on the way people, bands, labels, zines, the scene handles itself and approaches life. That will never happen". How wrong we were. See, the taste is addictive – you have one little bite thinking "What harm can it do?", then another, and another, and with each little bite you keep telling yourself "What harm can it do?", until one morning you wake up and realise that you need that bite just to get through the day, and everything that you once were, and the scene once was has gradually mutated into a mirror image, a carbon copy, of the beast that offered you the golden apple in the first place. Instead of the free-thinking individual motivated by passion and excitement and a desire to do what is your heart, you've become another number, a conscript in the "Punks For Profit" army whose strings are manipulated by the mainstream industry and press, ready to consume whatever they tell us to, eager for another taste of the forbidden" fruit. They give us a uniform and package the whole "rebellion" deal in a neat little starter kit and send you into the world with a "Punk Rock Rulebook" and a preordained value system, because that's what Punk Rock is after all. It's what it is, because the mainstream glossies, MTV, the major labels and cash-in-quick-while-we-can-still-make-a-fast-buck companies say so. No more making those "hard" decisions for yourself, no more free thinking, no more individuality, no more discovering bands who play because they want to play and aren't motivated by green backs, no more reading zines that only exist because people want to share their opinions and love of the scene, no more clothes from Oxfam or surplus stores, no more shows in squats or run down pubs. Somebody else will do the thinking for you, somebody else will tell you what bands to listen to, your "uniform" is available from any high street store with only a 500% mark-up, the music glossies will tell you what to think and do and shows will maximise your rebellious instincts by packing you into arenas and cramming you into outdoor festivals. If it isn't motivated by profit and run by greed, then it isn't Punk Rock, soon to become a registered trademark of whatever corporation wants to use the "logo". It's a production line kids and we all face being dragged along.

Think I'm joking? Have you read Kerrang lately? What used to a be a guide to big hair farming is now embracing an "alternative" and touching up the bands that they used to delight in mocking for being Punk Rock (Bad Religion anyone? Yeah, Kerrang! I remember you thieving, leaching, wannabe nu-metal fucks). Check the major rosters (freely available on-line) - they've all got at least one token "alternative" or "Punk Rock" band waiting in the wings so they can capitalise on what they've started. Switch your TV on and tune into MTV or Top Of The Pops, and there's your dancing puppets, if they can't get their ratings through Gareth "anything for pay day" Gates, they'll hit you with the latest all-singing-all-dancing video by whatever pop-punkers look good on camera, and can be sponsored by the highest paying endorsers who provide the uniforms for the "Youth Of Today".

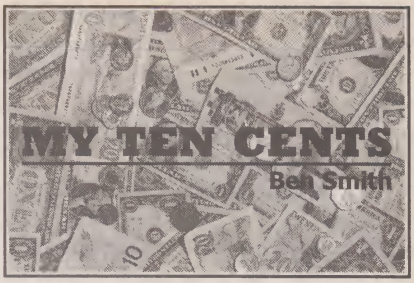
It doesn't stop there either. The deception spreads into the ranks of those who once were motivated by nothing more than a love of music. New "punk" bands want the major deal, they want the payola. New labels follow the "Industry Guide For Dummies" written by the majors, following the code of conduct to the letter by supplying bullshit contracts and gagging orders and basing their dealings around a pack of lies ("So-and-so is going to sponsor us for hhhhmmmm, one million dollars", "TV wants you for this, TV wants you for that", "Our web-site can turn shit into shinola with a wave of my magic wand", "I'm going to have **'insert number here'** thousand records pressed because they're already on order, "Want to work for me? I'll pay you **insert number here** thousand pounds a year", "I invented the moon", "I'm The King Of Angola" – okay, so I made the last two up, but who cares), and when it comes time for them to deliver on the deception, they blame everybody else, threaten legal action (since when did punk rock involve lawyers and solicitors?) and disappear owing bands and their "think-of-another-term-for-employee-because-we-dodged-a-contract-and-they-thought-our-word-would-be-good-enough-suckers..." the money that they originally promised to pay. New promoters think only of their bottom line, stiffing bands so that they can make a profit and eat caviar while bands choke on stale bread and out-of-date jam. The mainstream glossies become the Punk bibles and a whole generation of kids would rather follow their ill-informed bullshit than pick up a zine or read a damn book. Let's face it, there's a generation of Punk kids growing up who don't know that zines even exist. The infection is spreading, and it's up to each one of us to get the vaccine.

So how do we get vaccinated? Simple. You make a decision. What does Punk mean to you? Is it "Only Entertainment", or is it more? If it's only entertainment, then join your buddies on the production line – glad to see you go, you won't be missed. If it's more, than that, ignore the mainstream. Erase it. You were looking for something different from the "mainstream" when you came here (the scene is everywhere) right? So lose their value system. Use their tools against them – hit the net, check out all the underground stuff you can, use the links, check out the bands who don't give a shit about money, read zines, check out the zine reviews and send off for more. Hit the little shows, support the smaller labels. Buy on-line from distro's and labels, support mom-and-pop record stores and ignore the major chain stores (Virgin? My hairy arse, I've never seen a store more in love with the taste of corporate genitalia). It's not hard, it just means making your decisions, and thinking for yourself instead of having blind faith in the corporate sponsors who are determined to rape and destroy everything in order to protect the bottom dollar. Remember what DOA said? "Talk Minus Action Equals Zero". Do you talk a good game, or do you really want to play? The ball is in your court.

One last thing, D.I.Y doesn't mean that bands and labels can't be successful. If bands and labels approach the way they do business in an honest and open manner, then so be it. Success as a goal should be secondary to what is in your heart, and if you earn it, good luck to you!!! I don't begrudge you a minute of it, and I'm pretty sure that no one else does either. Sometimes, the right place at the right time really does work, but mostly it comes down to hard work, self - belief and doing things your own way. That is, doing things the punk way, following your heart instead of your wallet and your head.

It's a simple equation people. You here because you want to be? Because you feel it? Because it means something more to you than just a pair of trainers and the latest fad that's being rammed down your throat? Or are you just hitching a ride to the next stop? Make your decision and live with it. It's a simple choice – stand up and be counted or go with the flow and be swept downstream with the tide. I always liked swimming against the tide – it's fun, trust me, and if you don't believe me, try it yourself. You'll be amazed by what you can do when your back is well and truly against the wall, and how many people in the river are prepared to help you swim upstream. Come on in, the water's fine.

Mass Movement :
Well, number 12 is out and it's a double issue (yup, two zines) – interviews with **RKL, Bad Religion, ETA, The Hellions, I Defy, JFA, Mercury Legion, Brezhnev, Napalm Death, CH3** and more, plus the usual features, columns and other assorted crap. It's £1-50 plus an SAE from: **18 Hazeldene Ave, Brackla, Bridgend, CF31 2JW, UK;** massmovement@currantbun.com... And while you're at it, check out **Scanner, Suburban Voice, Artcore, Real OD, Short, Fast & Loud, Reflections** and **Reason To Believe** as well.



MY TEN CENTS

Ben Smith

"There's something wrong here,
with this scene that's going on,
it all began when the money it came,
and everybody thought they were a star"
Jugheads Revenge

Right, as this is a 'themed issue' I'm going to expand on one of the points I mentioned last time, major labels. Apparently 'punk' is just another sub-genre these days and 'selling out' is probably more about your bands memorabilia mugs than it is your morals/ideals. Somebody said this would be a dull column that had been written a million times before, well then don't read it fucko, it seems to me though that if you state and opinion it's like declaring open season to be ridiculed for it. Well, here are some 'facts' (oh and probably some more opinions, bite me!) to back up the statement I made that major labels = bad. It also answers (I hope) a number of points made / questions asked on the Fracture forum.

Major labels are just successful 'indies'.
Wrong, the big 4 (Universal, Sony, Time Warner-EMI, BMG) in general are large conglomerates with a variety of corporate interests. Although predominantly focused in media Sony, Universal and BMG also have investments in the home electronics industries (and therefore what we play music on). EMI used to be the only company that is predominantly focused on music, and economists believe this is why it has suffered falling revenues in recent years, and was then gobbled up by Time Warner. Large successful 'indies' are often incorporated into the big 4 through mergers, acquisitions, licensing and distribution deals. Basically, the big 4 pick off large 'indies' who are doing well and incorporate them into their business, often jettisoning less successful acts from these labels in the process.

Major labels are in it for money not music.
Seems that way to me, this issue has become particularly obvious with the recent technological battle over downloading music from the internet. Major labels have been frankly running scared

of loosing revenue and importantly control of the 'music industry' as downloading music from the internet enable bands to bypass labels and go direct to the consumer/listener. Recent high profile court actions have led to the closure of Napster, Audio Galaxy and also a high profile deal with MP3.com which is predicted to net each of the big 4 players between £9.9m and £16.6m yearly. Labels are also looking to make sure that they have a share in the market for downloaded material which is predicted to grow to £670 million by 2003. For example EMI has taken an equity stake in Musicmaker.com one of the largest custom-compilation CD and digital download sites. What the big companies apparently fail to realise is that 'free downloads' can boost sales, for instance A pre-Christmas promotion on CDnow, which gave Beastie Boys fans the opportunity to create their own DIY compilation albums, increased sales of the group's traditional albums by 265%2. Oh and the major companies blamed internet piracy for a slump in revenue, but hang on a moment that was at the same time as they made their highest profits ever!!

Okay so the internet aside, lets go back a few years, how did the major labels react to the growth of independent labels in the 80's, well as I have pointed out already they bought up the successful ones and set up their own 'independent' labels so as not to loose control of the industry and to keep a constant revenue stream not matter what the 'trend'. The large 6 companies (which have now reduced to 4) saw an independent hit as a way of 'breaking a new artist' and by 1993 'independent charts' were a farce and just another tool for the large companies to promote, sell and make money. 'Indie' is now just a genre marketing term and has nothing to do with being independent.

Okay now lets regress again to the birth of the CD, CD's came about because they were a technological innovation and the public demand wanted this new improved technology, right? Wrong, here is the story as detailed by Negativland5. In the early 80's sales of vinyl, cassettes, turntables and cassette players were "flat". This means that sales were stable, not rising or falling. For the major manufacturers of these products this was a bad thing, as they were unable to increase their revenues and therefore profits. Then the Phillips Coporation (a major defence contractor, so there was probably plenty of US tax payers money sloshing around) who also owned Polygram and Island records (now all part of Universal) decided it would be a great idea if the public had a new format to buy music on. So was born the compact disc, it could store a maximum of 75 minutes of music (purely because the president of the company wanted to be able to fit Beethoven's 9th on there) and was hailed as a technological innovation. But there was a problem, CD's were too expensive, the production process was inefficient and the public thought the new CD players were also too expensive too. But then in 1989 all of a sudden vinyl started to disappear like it was an endangered species and CD's were everywhere. This wasn't driven by consumer demand for CD's but by the policies of the major record labels. Record stores generally receive goods on a 'sale or return' basis, basically if they don't sell the items they can send them back to the distributors. In the spring of 1989 the major record label distributors announced that they would not be accepting 'returns' on vinyl and began deleting the vinyl versions of their back catalogues. This forced stores to stop stocking vinyl as it became too risky and expensive and increasingly unavailable. Basically the stores were forced to convert to high priced CD's and the public found them forced upon them.

So the majors had got their new format into the stores and therefore they could get their revenues and profits on the up again, but they didn't stop their. Majors still continued to pay artists royalty rates calculated on sales of vinyl which was cheaper than CD often obscuring this with contractual tricks such as 'packaging deductions'. Meanwhile the price of producing CD's fell as the manufacturing process was improved, this drop was never passed onto the consumer with prices actually rising! The end result of this is that during a period of economic recession in the early 90's the major record companies made its biggest profits ever. Major labels are still paying artists royalties on vinyl list prices and pocketing the difference whilst charging consumers £15 for a CD that costs 1/5 of that to manufacture.

It's okay if bands can keep their artistic integrity.

Oh yeh of course, because rather than slaving away in a 9 - 5 job making money for other people, if you are a band on a major you get to do what you want and enjoy, still making money for other people. Well it's marginally better, but it's surely not what creating music is about. Don't you make music because **you** want to and feel that you'd like to share it with others, why should someone else profit from the music that **you** have created at your expense. It would be great if those who want to make music and live their lives from this enterprise could do so without someone else profiting, and that is surely where the independent/diy label comes into play in helping to finance and distribute that work. Recently many bands have realised that the major labels are ripping them off, this led to the high profile court case last year between Courtney Love and her label Universal in which she alleged that 'not only is her contract unfair, but that business practices throughout the whole music industry are rotten and indefensible6.' Bands and artists on major labels can find themselves virtually bankrupt as contracts mean they pay for recording costs, receive reduced royalties and often can find themselves not actually owning the music they produce.

Major labels dominate the 'music media'.

Major companies dominate the media, why should it be any different in the realm of music. Read 'Corporate Media and the Threat to Democracy' by Robert McChesney (Open Media Pamphlet Series, No. 1). Enough said!

Major labels help 'world artists'.

I have to admit that major labels have been a positive force in promoting 'world' musicians to a wider audience. However generally this hasn't been until prompted by one of their own 'home-grown' artists (for instance Paul Simon, Peter Gabriel), and remember the major's still making money. I couldn't find any information on how high profile 'world' artists were doing financially...if I do I'll write a follow up.

'Indies' are as bad as Majors.

Just because a label is independent doesn't mean that it necessarily is 'good', the whole Three days dead debacle is testament to that. But surely this is where the concept of a 'punk' label comes into play? Punk shouldn't be a genre, it should be more that, we have the ability to run labels (and distros, gigs, web-servers, anything) based on friendship, trust and mutual respect not making money and trying to spring-board into the 'big time'. Yeh I've put the rose tinted glasses on again but fuck it there are some excellent labels etc. who really demonstrate what can be done outside of the mainstream bullshit.

So there you go, disagree? Well why not put your side of the case for major labels, I'm sure Fracture would run it in the spirit of free speech and debate, this isn't Kerrang after all. Oh and before all you bored internet geeks start calling me a ‘punk fascist’ or something equally as witty, I’m not telling you what to do, I’m merely stating an opinion hopefully backed up with some ‘facts’. I **used** to buy major label releases until quite recently, then I realised the insanity of funding something I didn’t like...

Anyhow usual story, hate mail to **benny_boy35@hotmail.com**, check out www.diypromoters.co.uk if you are a band/promoter (hopefully there will be a new better, more complete version soon) and if your at all interested check out my band at www.lamanocornuda.co.uk.

1. http://news.zdnet.co.uk/story/0,,t269-s2079477,00.html
2. http://shopping.guardian.co.uk/newsadviews/story/0,5804,128767,00.html
3. http://books.guardian.co.uk/review/story /0,12084,725486,00.html
4. http://www.cherryred.co.uk/books/indiehits/iainintro.htm
5. http://downlode.org/etext/negativland_shiny.html
6. http://www.guardian.co.uk/arts/story/0,3604,526401,00.html

“The label says the records great but they don’t hear a hit” - **Electric Frankenstein**

COPACETIC
with David Stuart

As you’ve no doubt figured, there is a theme running through this issue. What follows is my personal perspective on the subject of bands becoming popular, major labels taking an interest in punk rock and the like. I’ve written and re-written this and I’m submitting this final draft before I just say *“Fuck it”* and bin the lot (after reading what follows you might be wishing I had!). I guess I’d rather be writing about something more interesting, putting down the Christian, straight-edge militia (did you have to do EVERYTHING your parents wanted you to do!) and trying to be, if not humorous, at least interesting. I’ll attempt to do that next time around, but for now...

Success - good or bad?

You know what? I don’t have a problem with any band for wanting to better themselves and further their career, I can’t begrudge any person slogging it out week after week, for wanting to make a little money, buy some nice equipment and be rewarded for their hardwork. I think it’s fine if bands want to become bigger than the punk rock scene allows. The punk rock scene has, is and will always be a stepping stone for an awful lot of bands, most won’t have planned it that way, but it is just the way it goes. If a band is comfortable and enjoys being in the underground scene, sells enough records and tours enough then the underground can be a happy hunting ground for a lot of bands. But some bands just grow, sometimes at a momentum that propels them along in a way that the punk rock scene can’t deal with.

A perfect example of this case scenario would be **KIDS NEAR WATER**. I remember seeing them play a couple of years back at the Peel in Kingston. It was one of their first gigs and they were incredible, everyone who saw them thought so. Every once in awhile a band like that comes along, they have something special, a new dynamic that is fresh and exciting. The folks in punk rockville thought so and when they put a record out, mainstream channels showed an interest too. Features in *Kerrang!,* support slots to big bands playing the large London venues, tours and travel followed. That’s wonderful, I don’t see a problem with that and can’t see anyone’s logic who does. Other bands have retained their style and gotten some success. **CAPDOWN** have influenced hundreds of kids to go out and form nasty little ska punk bands. **HUNDRED REASONS** have continued to grow and improve tenfold without sacrificing their integrity. I think it’s perfectly reasonable for a hardworking band to reap some of the rewards that can be gotten from *“Rock & Roll”.* On the other hand I could name other bands that a year or so ago were playing Fat Wreck style pop punk and now they’ve grown their hair out and changed musical direction in a vain attempt to keep up with their peers, bands like that never win, their phoniness is too apparent and glaringly obvious to anyone over 14 years of age.

I guess my biggest problem with bands becoming popular, is that once a band reaches certain level of *“fame”,* I feel it’s time I should move on. on a personal level. Once 1000 people want to see a band play then I know that the band in question is out of my ballpark. Sometimes that sucks because bands I have really loved have gone on to become big names, I’m happy for them and they deserve their moment or two or glory. It’s kind of reassuring when a band you loved and believed in, becomes popular... it almost proves you right It can also be a pain in the ass if it’s a band you don’t feel ready to *“let go”* just yet. I saw **FACE TO FACE** a week or so ago at a small-ish venue and they kicked ass, played old and new songs with plenty of passion and I am glad I finally go to see them play in an environment that I find beneficial to “punk rock music” (saw them a few months before in a huge venue supporting a bigger band and that was a big mistake for me). I’ll not bother going to see them again, they’ll not be as good as they were that night and all I could hope for is slight disappointment. So that’s it between **FACE TO FACE** and myself, relationship over. Sure, I’ll still pop on the old records every once in a blue moon, play them in the car stereo I guess. But ultimately there’s nothing more I can get from them. If they manage to make a shitload of new fans then that’s all well and good. I’m not going to hang around like a bad smell. Same has been said and can be said for the following: **ALKALINE TRIO, SAVES THE DAY, GET UP KIDS, NO FX, BOUNCING SOULS, AVAIL, RANCID, HOT WATER MUSIC** etc. etc. They have released some mind blowing records, played some incredible shows that I’ve bared witness to, but nowadays they have enough new fans that I don’t feel I’m required to stick around. They’ve flown my little punk rock nest and my interest in them is over. I don’t really mind, I’m happy for them and it’s cool that there’s so many kids who are into them. I have no problem with that situation at all. There’s plenty more bands out there that excite me and hopefully I can help spread the word, it’s what I do. Music to me is a personal and intimate relationship. I don’t want to share it with the trend-hopping fly-by-nighters and Johnny-come-lately’s. They can enjoy the latest big thing, I’ll go back to square one and go about discovering some more new awesome bands to satisfy my musical craving. A big part of my punk rock life is checking out new bands, that’s exciting and that has always been a huge part of my love for this *“scene”.* I saw the latest **GET UP KIDS** LP in the store today... but I was more excited about the two demos I was sent in the mail this morning.

The Venue Thing.

When bands get big they have to start playing bigger venues to cope with the ticket demands. That’s where my main problem lies in bands that become popular. The bigger the venue the bigger the problem, I love small clubs and pub back rooms, there’s an energy that comes from watching (and playing) in those cramped environments and an excitement that is all but lost when transferred to the *"big stage".* It bugs me having to buy tickets a month in advance to ensure that I can get into a show and I detest paying a fucking booking fee. The big venues are manned by numbnuts in black playing a lovely game of intimidation, you'll probably be searched as you enter a gig (sorry, *concert*) and have your bag rifled through, anything not allowed in is confiscated and thrown away, don't try and bring your prescribed medication in, you may be forced to bring along a doctors note to keep a hold of it. The venues are over sold, somewhere like The Astoria or the LA2 Mean fiddler is gonna be rammed to fuck, you need to allow 10 mins just to get to the bathroom, a can of Red Stripe will cost you 3 quid and if you're really lucky you'll be left waiting outside until the first band is on and then hoofed out super-quick as soon as the last note of the headlining band has rung out. That's not my idea of fun, it's certainly not my idea of *punk rock.*

Major Labels bad?

I personally love music, above and beyond any *"scene"* or genre. To limit myself to *independently* produced music is not going to work. Some of my all-time favourite records have been on major labels. I'm not saying that it's a great thing, it's just the way it is. So many punk rockers lost interest in **JAWBREAKER** when they signed to a major for their last album. Before a song had been recorded people were saying they a *"Sold out".* Then they released *"Dear You"*, which is, in my opinion, the most beautiful collection of sad songs ever composed. That album helped me through an incredibly difficult period of my life, you think I gave a single shit that it was on Geffen? *"Back in black"* (**AC/DC** of fucking course) - one of the worlds finest rock albums - is on Atlantic (as is the **LEMONHEADS** "It's a shame about Ray" - another perfect record), **SOCIAL DISTORTION's** "White light, white heat, white trash" is without doubt one of the best punk rock albums ever penned... on Epic/CBS. "London Calling" by the **CLASH** on CBS... the list of incredible records and groundbreaking records, released on major labels is almost never-ending. So my problem is not with major labels. By saying I'm going to boycott major labels is as ridiculous as saying I'm going to boycott major publishing houses, they exist for a reason and that reason is supply and demand. Whenever a *"punk"* band signs a major label deal, then crashes and burns, whose fault is that? Maybe the record company didn't work it as hard as they should have, maybe there just wasn't a demand for the final product, as much as major companies want to push the "latest" big thing, if a band can't sell shit then they are bad for business and will ultimately be dropped unless they have someone up high in the company who believes in them, even then, that belief can be dented and wane with bad sales. *"Major labels ruin bands?"* No, bands ruin themselves. Major label practice has really fucked over and fucked up a lot of once independent bands, but aren't the bands even more to blame for fucking up on a course that has hosted so many casualties along the way?

KERRANG!

Bands love being in Kerrang! and labels love having their bands in Kerrang! Everyone gets a buzz from being featured in Kerrang! Sure, most of the bands that are covered in it are crappy, industry pushed bands being force-fed to the kids. But, there are some good points and to be honest I quite enjoy reading it. It makes me hate bands that I don't know or have heard of, it can be unintentionally funny and mind-numbingly retarded. But I don't think it's as *"evil"* as a lot of folks make it out to be... fer chrissakes, it's a music weekly!! Not Mein Kampf serialised. I guess people think that it *"takes"* bands from the underground music scene and markets them towards mass appeal and consumption, maybe it does. It's not as if this happens without the bands consent, we blame everyone and everything for *"scamming"* on punk rock and picking out the potentially successful bands, but we never seem to point the finger towards the band. I don't care one iota that **JIMMY EAT WORLD** are in the music weeklies week in week out, I think it's a shame that the band have shed any last layer of mystery or personality in order to be huge cover stars. I've read a fair few interviews with them and they have absolutely nothing of interest to say, they are the most boring band in print. They have released a couple of great albums but my interest in them has long gone. Over-exposure is the biggest problem facing these bands who choose that path. We've seen **GREEN DAY, OFFSPRING, RANCID, SICK OF IT ALL, AGNOSTIC FRONT, BLINK 182, ALKALINE TRIO** all take the route of *"The latest smash sensation".* Some have survived through it all with their integrity, some haven't. But Kerrang isn't *"evil"*, sure it's part of the EMAP group, big business puts people off, but they'll still drink mass produced beer, smoke cigarettes, watch TV, have nice items like DVD players, PC's, guitars, stereos... all things brought to you by huge corporations. You can't avoid it, not buying Kerrang could be seen as a start of the big business boycott, but does it really matter? It's a throwaway weekly that goes with the (their?) flow. It serves a purpose. Sure, a lot of the time I think it's complete rubbish and a major label cocksucking entity, but sometimes a beacon shines through that fog and an underground band or label gets a little push, which does them no harm. So, no, I don't have a problem with Kerrang! and read it on a regular basis, more than can be said of MRR... who ever said I was Mr. Punk *fucking* Rock anyway?

The Last Bit.

I'm actually cutting this short, I've written so much on this subject of *"Selling out"*, 70% of which I have omitted because I just keep coming back around to the fact that I don't actually care that much. I care about music and the underground, but I can't control it, no-one can. The scene grows, it splinters, it reforms. It will continue to do so for as long as people want to play rock & roll music with an attitude. There's no wrong or right way to operate a band, label, magazine or venue. You just have to hope for honesty and integrity. Anyone practicing those qualities will come through, whatever life throws at them, with their dignity and their values intact. Those who lie, cheat and let others down will always be around, leeching off of the hard work of others. All we can do is route out the bad apples and ignore them on every level. There is a working underground DIY scene, there's several... hardcore, punk, emo, straight-edge, whatever-the-fuck you wanna call it. All of these sub genres exist on their own because of the dedication of those individuals who work together to create an alternative to the mainstream. People will always need an alternative. I'll always be looking for something that goes against the grain. If I ever *sell out*, it'll be for something very special, so until I'm living in a Hugh Hefner style mansion with 175 million in the bank and eating pistachio ice cream from the cleavage of playboy centrefolds, I'll be around in the underground. The underground is fun, it's personal and you know what? The underground is where you'll find the people with the true love of music in their hearts, in the overground is where the true love of music is replaced by the true love of money. Fuck that shit.

Thanks for reading, if it made sense... I'd be surprised! ***David Stuart***

RUSSELL
REMAINS
SOUTH
666
TRUST NOTHING

Six weeks ago today I was meant to be in Times Square. Fate had dealt me the bum hand it usually does - meaning I was actually in the arrivals lounge of Dulles Airport in Virginia. Twenty minutes later I was lost in a Maryland pine forest asking a guy how to get to New York. His incredulity was only matched by the straight-up look on my face. Oh wait, this is that major labels and DIY labels issue right? I'll save that tale for some other time then. Along with quite why three weeks ago I was perched on the ridge of a dormant volcano on Hawaii, peering down on Bruce Willis' lawn, pondering just how just how I ended up in these slightly surreal places when I should have been safely living my usually hermitic lifestyle at home and writing about major labels and the depoliticization of punk rock in the 00's. So yeah, Virginia and Hawaii aside, let's go back a few years and dump ourselves in a cloud of red dust in the Mojave area of California, Palm Desert to be exact.

It's a beautiful and desolate place. Nothing but the searing red sun, drifting sand, cholla cacti, coyotes prowling for scraps, rocks eroded into myriad shapes by the wind and sand. And there's two guys standing next to you; long hair, three days of stubble, sun-faded clothes and a demeanour that you overridingly know means they just don't give a fuck, about anything. "Listen", says one, "if you go out to the middle of the desert and sit there, you can see every color in the world." You nod, sagely. "And when you sit there for a while, baking under the sun, dust in your face, that's KYUSS in a fuckin' nutshell", continues John Garcia. "It's a way of life," confirms the other figure, Scott Reeder. "A good way of life. The only way of life," concludes Garcia.

KYUSS began life in that desert, playing the infamous canyon shows as a sublime precursor to what we fouled up on these shores with free rave parties. You get a generator, some fuel, a band, some trucks and you strike out for the canyon whose natural acoustics are going to suit your riffs. And in some sort of underground communication, word gets around. Maybe there's a fire burning in the cracked and empty hot-tub of the derelict hotel complex up on the hills high above Palm Springs. The kids stack a few cases of beer in the back of a ramshackle car, take the I-10 out of town towards Indio, hit a dirt-road and head for the canyon. And there under the massive white moon, with the chugging of the generator as ambience, you rock the fuck out. KYUSS, along with a few other notables, were one of the canyon mainstays and with their local support growing as each relentlessly hot month passed, it wasn't long before they were ready to release their debut record "Wretch" on the independent Dali Records. It was a primitive attempt to harness their downtuned riffs and outright power and the larger response to it was understandably muted - "they" hadn't seen KYUSS playing to thirty kids in a dustblown canyon. "They" were still down on LA's neon strips watching Nikki Sixx fuck-up again because he was too strung out on whatever was doing the rounds that week. But the right people had noticed; Chris Goss and Dave Grohl pushed the band relentlessly until they eventually came to the notice of Elektra Records, a heartily major label if ever there was one. There was something happening out there in those godforsaken dusty places, their A&R men were told. After their momentous "Blues for the Red Sun" had turned all the right heads, Elektra picked them up to welcome them into the arms of a major label and all that it entailed: tour support, recording budgets, managers, promoters, bookers, equipment deals, a TV on your fucking tour bus for fuck's sake. A few line-up changes aside, they toured the world, they lived off the band, they played their rock and it's probably safe to assume they did a lot of it in a drug-addled haze. Rock and fucking roll, yes sir, delivered on a plate, sweet as you fucking like and seconds if you want it.

And then, just as you cynics knew it would, things changed. After a few seminal albums, personal strife tore rifts in the band and KYUSS were gone, leaving little eddies of dust and a legacy that was to outgrow them way beyond their demise. "It wasn't properly pushed, it wasn't available to all ears. It frustrated me that I was signed with the major label and nothing happened. It was one of the reasons why KYUSS broke up..." lamented John Garcia after the split. All had not been so well in cosy Elektra-land. Ironically, KYUSS, like many artists before them, were destined to only gain the recognition they deserved years after their demise. Band members went their separate ways and in the following years bands like FU MANCHU, MONDO GENERATOR and QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE emerged from the splinters of the band, each to achieve their own success. The singer, John Garcia, after a brief flurry with SLO BURN that never worked out, formed a new band, UNIDA.

Starting anew is never easy, but UNIDA plugged away, cranking the riffs out with all the fuzz-soaked distortion you'd expect. They just wanted to play rock and roll, if it paid cash all the better, but at the heart of it was just a desire to rock the fuck out. "There's bands that want a $4000 guarantee even when it's a benefit AIDS show. Give me a break. All I want is someone that will understand our sound and will get our sound across, a good soundman and maybe a 12 pack of beer. I'll go sleep in a tent, that's all I want. I'm not asking for $4000 to go up there and play. It's more my style to play a biker fest, a bunch of fucking Harley Davidson outback motherfuckers, that's more my style, more my taste. Shit like that trips me out... big fucking bands... just go out and have a good time."

Inevitably, when you're playing your rock with the sort of passion and pedigree that UNIDA already possessed, there's going to be independent labels ready to release your records. That's the difference see, it's the indies that will take the risks - it's so fucking backward that the labels run from home, from someone's personal savings account, the labels with so much to lose, are the only ones that take the chances on new bands. They find them, promote them and probably spend too many waking hours trying to get them some recognition so the records will sell and they might actually break even on the outlay. And all the while the majors just wait quietly until the waters are tested and, when the time is right, pluck the big fish from the small pond. As far as the indie label is concerned, it's somewhat of a no-win situation; band fails, it's cash lost; band makes good, it's band lost. I know it's "the way of things", but that doesn't mean it isn't a fucked-up hierarchy of risk-taking.

So anyway, after a relatively successful EP on Meteorcity Records and the even more successful "Coping with the Urban Coyote" album on the slightly larger indie Man's Ruin (ironically now gone bankrupt), UNIDA, now with ex-KYUSS bass player Scott Reeder in the ranks, garnered the attention of Rick Rubin's American Records, part of the whole Columbia / Sony multimedia corporation. Garcia had already stated in an interview in Psychedelic Fanzine while the band were still on Man's Ruin that "when you are on a major label you've got tour support, you've got money for recording, money to live on, you get major label support. A whole team of people are working behind you…" while at the same time also conceding that "they spend a lot of money on you, but you have to pay it back once it's over." Regardless the lure was too much and UNIDA signed to American, and with the cash laid on the table, duly spent it on recording their new album, their first for a major. The good days were back again; tour support, recording budgets, managers, promoters, bookers, equipment deals, a TV on your fucking tour bus for fuck's sake. But fate is a fickle bastard at the best of times.

Cue Scott Reeder: "Everything was set to come out on [American via] Columbia. The artwork was done, everything was looking really good, and then, I guess, Rick Rubin had a falling out with Sony and moved the whole label over to Island / Def Jam and apparently, after months of being just strung along with "oh yeah the release date got bumped back a little bit", we finally found out that somebody at the label didn't like the record so they didn't want to deal with it. The lawyers had to go back and forth for months and months - a chess game where every move takes 2 months… "you have sixty days to reply to this letter…" - and so we just got out of the deal maybe 2 months ago… we're clear now, but they still own the record and we can't re-record the songs for a year…"

And there's the fucking rub - the card-shuffling dirty fingers in dirty pies rub - you are not in control. You are a product. You are a spreadsheet. You are, on the whim of a faceless accountant, totally worthless. Fuck your music, fuck your record, fuck your gigs, fuck your art, fuck off. Thanks. Oh and by the way, we hate your record but we're keeping it anyway. Just in case, you understand…

So here we have one of the finest straight-up rock bands around today, containing musicians who moulded a sound, left on a shelf, gathering the dust of a musty room somewhere in an anonymous office block. Hardly the hot swirling dust of a canyon in Palm Desert. An album recorded two years ago, the pride and passion of four people, is now in the hands of lawyers and accountants. Word is that it will now be released sometime in 2003 - label unknown.

And in a final twist of irony, now that John Garcia has been dropped as an artist from American, it also releases him from what must have been an exclusivity clause in his contract ("you work for us, or you for work nobody, boy…"). In the early days of UNIDA, he'd recorded an album in a band called HERMANO along with members of DISENGAGE, AFGHAN WHIGS, SUPAFUZZ and ORQUESTA DEL DESIERTO - however the strangling contract of American had prevented it from being released while Garcia was tied to American's noose. The silver lining of this desert raincloud, is that the HERMANO album will finally see the light of day on Tee Pee Records, only a few years late. But hey, why should American, Sony, Columbia, Island or Def Jam give a fuck about that? Many dirty fingers, many dirty pies.

So the moral of this overly-convoluted riff-fuelled parable is this: a major label can be good - for one in a thousand bands they'll sell your records, lend you money, lend you equipment, lend you tour support, lend you a PR team, lend you a manager and recording costs. They'll even lend you a fucking TV to put in your bus they loaned you. They won't lend you a god-given right to stay "in-vogue" though, or a lifetime pass to the charts or even someone on their side of the fence who'll look out for you. And when the sales figures roll out, and your file is marked, and your time is done, it's time to cash up. And that's when you're fucked. Bleed 'em dry, hang 'em high.

I think if there's one dangerous feed of misinformation represented in all the opinions that are covered in this issue of Fracture it's this old "there's nothing wrong with making a living playing music, and it's better than making a living working some boring job". Yes, of course, I wholeheartedly agree with that sentiment, any rational person would, but unfortunately that's all it is - blind sentiment. Sure, you'll "make your living" for about three years if you're lucky, or however long your contract lasts, but come the end of that term, your income is going to take a sharp downward trajectory, faster than your album sales have been of late in fact. And unless you're that one in a thousand band who might have a contract renewal, then you're going to be left high and fucking dry, up shit creek without even a canoe never mind the paddle. That's when the debts are settled, that when this living that you've been paying yourself for the past 3 years is recalled along with every other meticulously counted penny you've spent on yourself over the term of your contract. Your "advance" was a loan, you've been living off that loan and now the bankers want it back. What other job lends you your wages at the start of your contract, and then when your term of employment is over, asks you to pay back your wages along with your office expenses, cleaning costs, admin costs, canteen costs and stationary costs? It's a fucking sham and one that the labels have stitched up right from the start - they'll take you for the course, and, just as the blank-faced masses line-up to buy the latest industry created Pop Idol, there's a longer line of blank-faced bands lining up to be bled dry of their talent and then sucked dry of their profits.

Go into it with wide open eyes, and with the firm belief that all this will ever be is an all-too-brief adventure in the high-rolling lifestyle. That's the only way you'll survive. Go into it just to have your fifteen minutes of fame, and not with some blinkered fantasy of making money from your moment of glory. Be prepared to be stripped of any artistic freedoms you once took for granted; accept that you will be told what to record, where to record it, how to record it, where to play, where not to play, who to play with, what to have on your album sleeve, which track to release as a single, what to wear, what to say, who to talk to and how to act. Be prepared to become completely disenfranchised from your band, and for your music to become nothing more than trivial fodder that you're tired of playing. Be aware that your bridges are burned and there's no way back. And be aware that when the rollercoaster is over, they still own the past three years of your life.

And remember in amongst all this that every time somebody jumps the fence and glories in rebutting us with tales of "all those great bands on major labels, THE CLASH and SABBATH, THE RAMONES and BLONDIE…" that for every SLAYER and HUSKER DU there's a million vacuous bands left floundering around, just another figure in some financial filing cabinet waiting to be terminated and settled up. Every single band to ever sign to a major is convinced that they will be the next big thing, and those no-hope one-hit wonder bands that signed to the same label a year previous just weren't up to the grade like you are. You'll last, you'll make it, after all you love your music. But remember, when your name goes on that contract, you're entering the biggest Battle of the Bands contest of all time, and the judges aren't listening to your music. They're too busy listening to the noises being made in a boardroom, or the figures being punched into a calculator or the latest bleatings from the NME journalists as they figure out whose adverts have paid for good reviews this issue.

I don't think the whole paradox could be summed up any better than John Garcia said back in 1997: "in my eyes there's nothing wrong with trying to make a living from having your heart cut out of your chest and put on a CD." You make a living, you give your heart. As the old cliche goes, "you sign your soul, for rock and roll".

NO CHOICE

DRY RIVER FISHING CD

For a band to come along and mix up bands like PEGBOY, HUSKER DU, LEATHERFACE, NAKED RAYGUN, THE RUTS, ANNALISE, mid-period BAD RELIGION, SNUFF and even CONSUMED and THE JAM is pretty unbelievable. For the end result to be as incredible as the new NO CHOICE album is even more unbelievable. That's why we've played these tracks for three months straight, and that's why "Dry River Fishing" is the first release for our label Newest Industry. It couldn't have been anything else. This twelve track CD album is going to be out late OCTOBER 2002, but you can pre-order it now!

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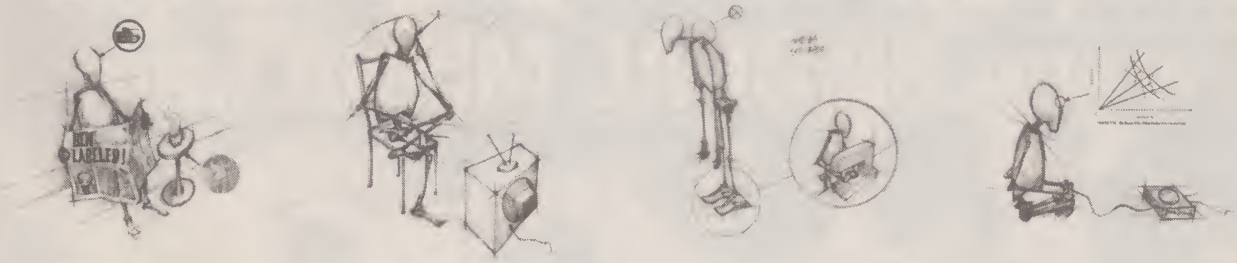

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Alex Erasmi, View Magazine

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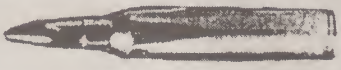

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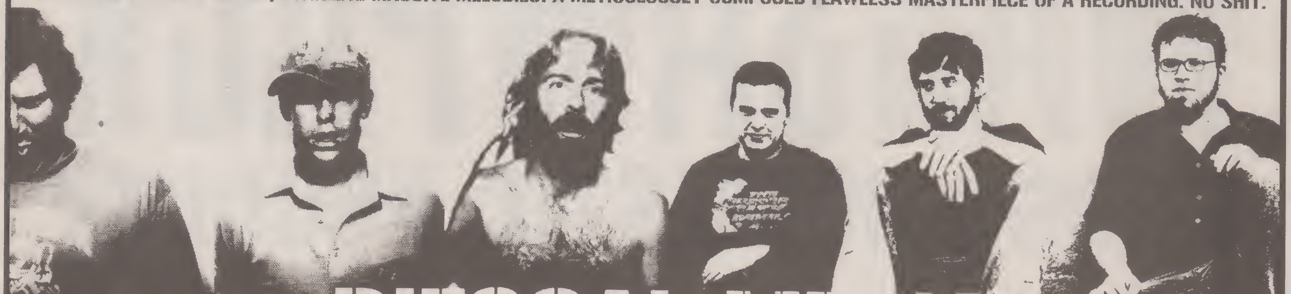

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BFM016

Shoes Day - 30th June, 2002

As regular readers of Fracture will know, columnist Jon "Shoes" Kay died earlier this year after a long fought battle with Leukaemia. As he was a good friend to most of the people involved with the RUDE TO STARE London gig collective, we decided to show our respect and have an all day show on June 30th 2002. There were several aims for this show, to remember a much-missed friend, to promote awareness of the help that we can all give, via blood donorship and enlisting as bone marrow donors, and to raise some money for the Leukaemia Research charity.

All the bands played for free and turned up on time, no hassles, no egos, just people who knew and didn't know Jon, coming together for a good cause and remembering a much missed friend.

It was quite incredible that there were no hitches, all the equipment showed up on time, nothing broke down and aside Ian from ECONOLINE's car getting towed away, there was no downsides to the day, maybe ONE-CAR PILE UP got the raw deal bandwise, as they took to the stage after the late afternoon break and people were still out getting food, so they played as the venue started filling up once more.

Highlights, well watching drunken Fracture Forum monkeys fool around was worth the admission price alone, DEAD INSIDE playing "Iron Maiden", which really was something special. The raffle draw with General Forbes putting record sleeve hats on TRAVIS CUT, Mac's face was a picture! Getting to see the excellent K-LINE for the first time, DAGOBAH back together after 3 years, MILLOY (as ever for me!), the smiles, the friendly atmosphere and everyone's generosity and time.

The line-up was (in order): SOON THE DARKNESS, ECONOLINE, K-LINE, DAGOBAH, DEAD INSIDE, ONE CAR PILE UP, TRAVIS CUT, MILLOY and SUNFACTOR. You did proud lads - thank you.

£1,000 was raised for charity and for those who knew Jon, it was a day to remember and have fun in memory of him. Jon's parents were there which was a nice gesture and the DAGOBAH boys (some of Jon's closest and oldest friends) sold some of Jon's CDs to raise money for the staff on the ward he was in and out of for the last months of his short life. We had invaluable help from Tracy Sharkpool who was away from her little baby for the first time, with Hilary they set up the bunting and got the place looking good. Adz from THE OSTERMAN WEEKEND who came down the day before and helped me collect speaker cabs, badges and wasted his Saturday driving through central London with me! Also Aston Stephens and all those bands and fine individuals who donated generously for the raffle prizes, making the winners very happy people indeed.

Thanks to everyone who played, paid, made and gave… we appreciate your support and friendship on that important day. Peter @ The Verge for being ultra cool with us and our pesky punk rock monkey business!

"Thank You"

The RUDE TO STARE COLLECTIVE : Chris Coleman, David Walters, Nic Tinworth, Chris Evans, Hilary Ellis, Rich Matthews and David Stuart. Photographs by Diego "Ding Dong" Mena.

Bands wanting to play London please contact us :
rudetostare@yahoo.co.uk

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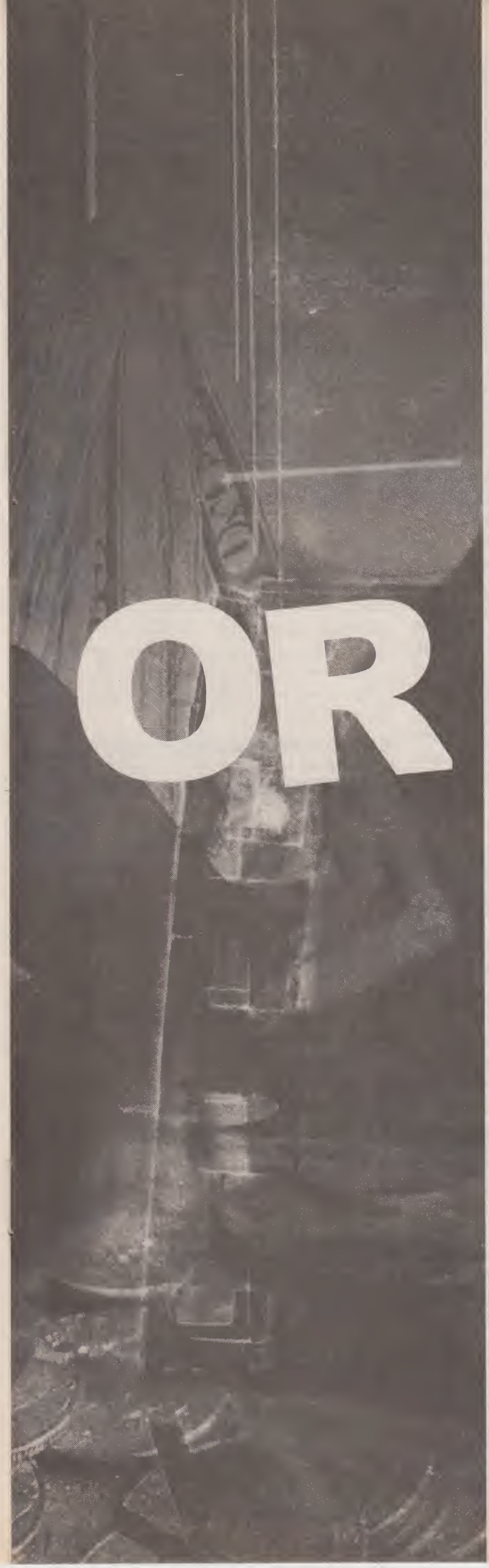

OR LIE?

For part of this issue we were going to have an article on Three Days Dead Records, which was briefly touched upon last issue in a column. We thought it would have fitted in well with the theme of this issue, but attempts to write the piece have been thwarted by legal threats that have hindered the investigation to the point that we felt we could no longer go ahead with what we had. When we attempted to get any answers from the label direct, they appeared to hide behind "confidentiality agreements" and in at least one case a band leaving the label have seemingly been "gagged" with a confidentiality agreement that they (allegedly) had to sign to get out of their contract with Three Days Dead. With a couple of the "main players" out of the picture, so to speak, and others scared about the legal implications of talking to us, we feel that we've been put in a position where the risk of publishing the piece is too great, and simply not worth the hassle.

At this point we must apologise to the twenty plus people we have spoken to (from bands, record labels and other organisations) who were under the impression that their stories would be heard in this issue. We really felt as though we had a moral obligation to all the people concerned to air their views, but at the end of the day all of these people hopefully have enough information to make their own minds up about the label and we hope they understand the position we were put in.

Finally, the artwork we've used as an introduction to the "DIY or Lie" articles we have acquired for this issue is "Faceless Greed" by Mike Bohatch (who also did the cover art for this issue). It was originally going to be used for the Academy Morticians album that was supposed to come out on Three Days Dead (but never did) and at the time was being used by the label, without the artists permission, on adverts promoting this record. The piece has since been acquired legally by Fracture, and we're proud to be using it here in this issue.

"IF YOU'RE GOING TO PUT YOUR TIME, MONEY, BLOOD, SWEAT AND TEARS INTO A BAND, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO WHATEVER THE FUCK YOU WANT WITH IT."

The above quote came from Zack Nelson of the band In Control. It was his response to this survey - I don't even know which side of the fence he was coming from but it works both ways regardless. Your band; your choice to sign to a major. Your band; your choice to forgo a lot of artistic freedoms.

The following responses are mainly from a survey of people involved in the punk scene conduced by Dario Adamic - he simply asked them for their opinion on the DIY vs Major Labels debate - these are their responses.

At Fracture we also conducted a massive survey of record labels, asking each of them the same questions about how their label is run. We wanted to present a picture of just how varied independent record labels can be, whilst still being classed as independent. There's no rulebook to abide by when it comes to running your own record label.

Amusingly, word got around that our survey was some sort of witch-hunt and that if a label answered 'wrongly' (whatever that may entail), then we wouldn't be dealing with them again. After we'd finished laughing like idiots, we reassured the labels they weren't on trial and we're not the Witchfinder General.

Unfortunately, most labels had a lot to say, and the finished article ran at over 30 pages and we couldn't justify running it at that size. It seems a shame but in the end we had to pull it. However some of the labels' answers are also included here amongst Dario's survey. I guess the full survey may appear on the Fracture website one of these days.

JOACHIM HILLER
OX FANZINE & RECORDS
GERMANY

I have mixed feelings on this issue that cannot be broken down to "major vs. diy". It would have to be "majors vs. big indies vs. small indies vs. diy", and that makes any judgement pretty diverse. But to keep my answer short: I used to have a really strict anti-major policy in Ox, but over the years I realized this black & white view of the world doesn´t make much sense. There´s good records coming out on majors as well, some nice people work there, so it´s a bit childish to totally boycott them, but in general majors are a drag to work with and no fun at all. And for every good band they have (100% ex-indie bands) there´s a million crappy ones - so there´s lots of reasons to ignore majors most of the time. I definitely love and prefer to work with indies: you share the same ideas / ideologies, we've known each other for years, they are mostly reliable partners, have good taste in their releases and are in most cases easy to work with: no business bullshit, just handshake agreements and you know who you´re dealing with. Ox could be a way bigger magazine today as it is if I had decided to work with majors more closely and take their money (and they simply have more), but I want Ox to be a fanzine (even though a big one with its print run of 13,500 copies). I want to stay true to my roots and not be a part of the latest trend brought to you by MTV & partners. On the other hand working with (some) indies can also be terrible: with some you have to wait forever to be paid (hello Jamdown Records UK!) while your invoices are due after 4 weeks and sometimes there is a good part of disorganisation on their side involved. But my general statement on that issue would definitely be "DIY yes, major no. No gods, No masters, Live your own life."

CYNTHIA CONNOLLY
DISCHORD RECORDS
WASHINGTON DC, USA

Independent music means just what it says. Independent from the confines of a corporate monster of which its main concern in the end is to make money from your music / art. That might not be bad though, if for some fluke of a reason your music / art is precisely what the corporation / major label wants and it's just a coincidence that the two of you can work it out. But, I believe that's what a band thinks when they sign to a major, and then your art and music is compromised by the hearts and souls of those who understand money, not art nor music, as your work is never what they precisely want.

ANDY LOW
ROBOTIC EMPIRE RECORDS
NEW JERSEY, USA

I realized that doing this whole label thing was a good way to help expose music that I consider great to new people. I'm really happy that it's gotten to the point that people actually actively check out our releases now, because I still just want to expose awesome music to the people who will enjoy it. I didn't really start this label with goals, but the main reason why I've done this the whole time is just to help spread great music... even if it isn't "mainstream friendly" or any bullshit like that. It's weird to hear about fests being sponsored by Red Bull... this isn't something I had to even think about before, and frankly I really don't care to. This scene doesn't need corporate sponsorship... we've lasted so long without and it compromises everything that's important about this "underground" music scene that we have. Keep the suits out of punk rock! Who cares if it will make money or not, as long as people are into it, that's all that matters.

NANETTE
FAT WRECK EUROPE
GERMANY

This is a pretty diverse question... I think it is really super important that there is a DIY scene. There are so many cool bands out there who don't want to be on a major label or would never make it to one... there are areas where there are no other labels... so I always supported DIY when I got hold of their records. I think also that independent labels are super important because they give some bands the chance to release records which they'd never had the chance to release on their own. And they give the kids the chance to find out about new music and stuff... There are black sheep that rip off bands, but I think most labels are okay and really worth your support... Then there are majors.. well, what can I say? They whine about CD burning and the internet and the same company (like Sony for example) earns tons of money for raw CDs, CD burners and MP3 players etc. They steal young and promising bands from their independent labels, they rip off bands, they might not rip them off, they make tons of money, they BUY all the radio and video airplay time... money means power... I think that's what I hate! Without them, there would probably never be such a thing as MTV but would we miss it? Would we miss bands like KORN? And PAPA

ROACH and all these? SUM 41? BLINK 182? Would anyone have known about them?? I doubt it! But as there is always a mainstream and will always be, it is illusionary that there will be a world without multinational mega companies... also in the music business. This is a very wide and political topic... not enough time for it all and it is hard to express all my thoughts in a foreign language! Squat houses! Form labels! Open Clubs! And support other people's!!

CHRIS EVANS
FIREFLY RECORDS
LONDON, UK

The idea with Firefly was to try to do things how we felt was properly - a decent amount of promos sent out, help out with booking tours, place adverts, get decent distribution etc - which I think so far we have done. I am not of the opinion that DIY means feeling guilty about trying to sell records. We like the records we put out (the main criteria of what we are going to release) and we want other people to hear them, as do the bands. Any money that we make is ploughed back into the label and future releases so it's not as if we even making any money from it personally. I don't really know what we wanted to achieve with it, I don't ever envisage doing it full time, just to continue to put out records we like really. Sometimes when you get and email from somebody saying how much they liked a certain release or you read a good review there is a sense of personal satisfaction...which is nice! I don't feel in any way guilty or less DIY for sending copies of releases to mainstream magazines as there is very little alternative left in this country. Before sending out copies of the Copperpot Journals CDs recently I emailed a batch of fanzines who had all done just the one or two issues of their zines, to see if they were planning a new issue and nearly all of them replied that they weren't! The only zines that you can rely on to appear reasonably regularly are those like Fracture, Suspect Device, Artcore, Scanner etc. This brings about the other problem that if I put out a record in July, and the next issue of Fracture or Suspect Device isn't out till September, if I wasn't to send it to the mainstream press as well I'd see no reviews for months! For the cost of one CD, one envelope and a stamp at least Kerrang will review the CD around the time of release. Times have changed and there is a whole new generation of kids into punk/emo/hardcore that have never read a zine in their life - I'm not saying that this is a good thing, it almost certainly isn't - but it's foolish to ignore a whole bunch of kids who might like the stuff on your label because of some elitist ideal of what is and what isn't DIY.

JOAO
DAY OF THE DEAD
PORTUGAL

In my opinion the DIY philosophy has always been present and is a constant characteristic of this movement that we call punk / hardcore. For me it's way more gratifying seeing a band's release recorded and done by themselves, than one that the band has just played the songs, but has that cool and pretty artwork that was imposed on them. Most of the labels in the hardcore scene are DIY, I mean the band besides recording the songs also decide at least 90% of the stuff on the records. Sometimes one band can't do the all things by themselves and these labels release and distribute their stuff (on a DIY form, since most of them are composed by just one or two individuals). That's pretty cool because it helps ideas and music to spread throughout different countries and different people. I think DIY has that purpose, to show that we don't need major labels to do the work, we can handle our things within ourselves, without having someone filling their pockets through our alternative musical and ideological expressions. Of course in the punk / hc movement there are a few labels, that at least I consider to work like majors. These pseudo major labels often don´t care about what message, ideals or purpose is expressed; the "almighty green" is their only motivation. It seems that the true essence of punk / hardcore vanishes when true feelings are forgotten. The DIY scene is one of the main pillars of this movement, and I think we should keep it that way. We need to try to keep greed out of our community, trying to avoid seeing our beliefs and convictions being sold through major corporations. I'll definitely agree that there's a thin line between what's DIY and what's not, so I guess you must stick to your beliefs and personal ideas of what DIY stands for.

CHARLES ROMALOTTI
INDEPENDENT PUBLISHER
TEXAS, USA

It depends entirely on the personal relation the artist would have with the major label. First, if there are no demands made by the label, and are willing to accept the artist as they are, and as they choose to be, then the creative integrity of the artist wouldn't be a question. In which case, it would come down entirely to the choice of the artist. To me, if making money will have no bearing on the quality and integrity of the art, then it is entirely a personal choice. And that person's choice should be respected, because they are the only ones in the position to make that choice. In my opinion, GREEN DAY didn't "sell out", nor did OFFSPRING. The world changed, and thus became open to a new sound and ideology. And is that really a bad thing? Every scene person has that band that got them into the underground. For many nowadays, those bands would be GREEN DAY and OFFSPRING. So is that a bad thing that they introduced so many new people to the underground? I'm not against artists choosing to go with the major labels at all. That's their choice.

HANS
LIAR & SOBERMIND RECORDS
KORTRIJK, BELGIUM

There's absolutely nothing cool on a major label, they limit your music and the only intention they have with a band is making tons of money. It's just a matter of using a band as a marketing tool. I've been playing in bands for over 15 years now, have done many records on different labels, have played a crazy amount of shows year after year and it doesn't stop... I was never bothered about being on a DIY label. Sure it has it's problems and bullshit, but nothing in comparison of all the bullshit you would get if you signed to a major label... this is just a thought.

ASTON STEPHENS
BOSS TUNEAGE RECORDS
SANDY, UK

I think that sponsorship is totally the band's decision. To be honest it's not something I actively encourage or discourage. I don't go looking for sponsorship for bands. It's something I haven't really considered! There are two sides to it really - it depends what the sponsorship is for, or what form it takes, or which company is offering it - obviously if BLOCKO got a sponsorship deal with Nike or McDonalds then I'd have a problem with it, but that's not going to happen!! I have been approached a couple of times for tracks for consideration on Playstation games and the like, and I have put them forward although nothing has come of them - but if a games company wants to pay £5000 or whatever for a punk rock song, which could mean the band can buy decent equipment and a van to get on tour, or pay for airfares for a tour, or pay for recording an album, and the band is not compromised by it, then why not? I think I've probably come

If you're going to put your time, money,

...your art and music is compromised by the hearts and souls of those who understand money, not art nor music...

across as pro sponsorship there, but I am not!! To be honest until your question arrived, I haven't ever thought about it much!! I honestly believe it's possible to build up a DIY network of labels which offers global distribution and a service to bands that a major cannot even compete with! And that would be the idea that is in my mind to work towards, a network of DIY labels around the world all working together to release and promote each others' bands and releases in every country without compromising a true punk rock spirit, where bands and labels could be assured of at least selling enough to cover both parties costs - true punk rock co-operation! Then no band would ever have to go that "major label route"!!

PHILLIP BLUNK
GEEKCORE RECORDS
KENTUCKY, USA

Well, first of all major labels are not the only ones who give bullshit record deals to bands. A lot of so called "indie" record labels rip off bands too, I couldn't really care less if a band is going to a major label or not. One of the bands that we have worked with was gonna go to a major before they broke up. I wanted them to go because they worked hard for everything plus it would help us sell their old release(s). I don't think you have to sell out everything you are or what you believe to sign on to a major label. If it's going to make you happy and if it's going to pay rent then go for it. A lot of people think its shitty for us to have our releases in major record/cd shops... I don't really care what anyone thinks but we do try to keep our prices low so every one can buy our stuff. We love to work with DIY folks but when it comes down to it we gotta pay bills. My wife and I hated working "real" jobs and we also hated school so we found a scheme to make money and a way to help bands out. That's why we started a record label.

BEN SMITH
WWW.DIYPROMOTERS.COM
LONDON, UK

I feel that the DIY scene gives us all the chance to get involved in the music we listen to whether it be playing, promoting, writing fanzines or just attending gigs. Major labels just want us to consume what we are given and only play our own music to do so for their profit. DIY is exactly that, getting out and having fun doing it yourself and in my opinion its a million times better than consuming the latest 'same old, same old' release pushed out in the marketing sub-genre of 'punk' by the big four.

IAN GLASPER
STAMPIN' GROUND & BLACKFISH RECS
LEDBURY, UK

To be honest, I don't see the problem with 'mainstream mags' - a lot of kids enjoy reading them, and it's a good place to get your releases some exposure. After all, there's a coupla zeroxed zines I can think of that think even Fracture is too mainstream! It's all about perception; your average teenage kid doesn't regard Kerrang as mainstream - to him or her it's a lifeline connecting them to their favourite bands! Besides, I'm sure almost everybody buys mainstream mags at some time or other - even if it's only a TV guide or a comic or a film review magazine - so why shouldn't mainstream magazine buyers be allowed to read about hardcore music... or aren't they good enough for us? I guess everyone knows where I stand on this point seeing as I'm a staff writer for Terrorizer, that infamous perverter of hardcore ethics!

MIKE RILEY
LOOKS LIKE RAIN & EMOGEDDON RECS
MARYLAND, USA

I listen to mostly punk and hardcore, bands that circulate throughout the DIY scene. I love a lot of music though so I also end up listening to some stuff on major labels. If I like a band, I'm not gonna resist buying their album just cuz it's on a major label. That's silly to me. Though in my mind, punk and major labels do not coexist. GREEN DAY is no longer a punk band. THE OFFSPRING, BLINK 182, etc are no longer punk bands. They may have a punk sound, but to me, punk and hardcore are about more than just what the band sounds like. There is an unwritten set of ethics and standards that punk bands exist within, and I think that is very important to this whole thing. We in the punk / hardcore scene are doing our best to exist under the radar of the mainstream. That's the only way we'll be able to keep doing things our own way.

JUSTINE DEMETRICK
PHOTOGRAPHER & PROMOTER
RHODE ISLAND, USA

I NEVER liked bands crossing over to the majors. Nothing like diluting the purity of an environment with people who really at heart don't get it, but, I don't have any faults with bands like GREEN DAY, that didn't necessarily chose to be huge - one can't help it if the masses appreciate you. It would be worse to just break up a band, or a writer to stop writing, a painter to stop painting just because they get popular. I wish people would look deeper into the issues of WHY a band get huge - ie are they using the punk scene as an exploitative stepping stone, or are they expressing something that just happens to appeal to the masses? Also, how come this selling out stuff only applies to musicians? Nothing better than being able to make a living at something you truly love. It is more of a sell out to quit your band or life style just to spend the majority of your waking hours working a job that promotes something you don't really believe in, all the while improving someone else's financial wellbeing. It's all about one's own quality of life and what they feel the need to do in order to obtain it.

STEVE JACKSON
BOMBED OUT RECORDS
LEEDS, UK

It's funny, but in the past few years it's not only seemed to become more common to see UK punk bands in the pages of Kerrang and the like but also more acceptable and sought-after. We will send our releases to magazines like Kerrang and we even send stuff to John Peel but that's more or less where the line is drawn. I'd rather send out 50 copies of a release to 50 fanzines run by people that appreciate and love the music and who know what we're trying to achieve that 10 copies to major music magazines whose only objective is to

...it's foolish to ignore a whole bunch of kids who might like the stuff on your label because of some elitist ideal of what is and what isn't DIY.

you should be able to do what-

blood, sweat and tears into a band...

We don't want to be a part of anything where trust, friendship and a sense of community become less important than financial success...

shift copies and who dabble in major label bribery. We don't feel we need them and we try to avoid these people as much as possible as they're at completely the other end of the scale to where we are. With the continuing rise of the popularity of punk music over the past few years I think people are starting to rely on mainstream music's outlets more and more which is a strange thing and the line between compromising your DIY beliefs and getting the music promoted is constantly shifting. I think it's mainly a case of going with what feels right - a gut instinct. I never want to have to rely on the mainstream music industry for anything and so while we may use them occasionally they will always be peripheral to scene fanzines, radio stations and anyone whose interest lies solely in the music, not on making money from it. This may sound like naivete but I think it's more down to a hope that we can do things differently to the major labels or larger indies and still do it successfully. We don't want to be a part of anything where trust, friendship and a sense of community become less important than financial success and if that stance puts any bands off wanting to work with us then they probably weren't the bands for us anyway.

YOICHI EIMORI
SNUFFY SMILE RECORDS
TOKYO, JAPAN

I just wanna do my thing by my own or with my friends and do it completely separately from any shit like major labels or commercial media. I was working for a major label 10 years ago and I hated everything I got in that period as a person working in the music industry. I didn't like almost every person I met when I was working in that company. People from labels, magazines, promoters and mass medias... now, I don't care what they do but I just don't wanna see their faces around me. Well, I know this is not a good answer for your question but I don't wanna think about "DIY vs major label" type of things. The only thing I can say is I just hate major labels because it's just business like any other company. Whatever, it's stupid to talk about major labels in Japan because I think many Japanese labels calling themselves independent are not far from major labels in their way to treat bands. Also you should know some foreign independent labels are distributed by Japanese major labels in Japan. So, I think it's not true to say "independent label vs major label". What does DIY mean? What does independent label mean? It's important to think about these kind of things.

STEVE
RIPPING THRASH FANZINE
STOCKTON-ON-TRENT, UK

No contest! DIY - bands can record what they like, sing about what they like, promote themselves as they like, complete control over their work. Major Label: no control, the label controls you, your output, and sometimes what you can sing about. Major labels are not interested in your band, your style of music, they are run for profit, they are part of the capitalist disease that I thought punk was opposed to. The people running the labels are businessmen, managers, shareholders who don't have a clue about any bands / ideologies etc on their label, they just want to make money off the 'next big thing'. The next big thing isn't going to be anarcho punk or crust punk etc, musically or ideologically... look at CHUMBAWAMBA... major labels dilute the music and messages of bands and have done for years now, I can't believe people still go for it.... The 'getting across to a wider audience' stance I can understand, but it always turns out to be bollox anyway, as the message either gets diluted, or bands' attitudes change as if they didn't really give a fuck anyway especially when the cash starts coming in. Or in a lot of cases bands fall by the wayside once they've gone to a major anyway... DIY - do it yourself - it's harder work, but it's more rewarding. I love the DIY aspect myself, writing and trading with lots of like minded punx, having complete control over what I can and cannot do, free of businessmen and corporate companies as much as possible - alas we are still in the clutches of the capitalist system by using items of manufacture such as vinyl, CD, pressing plants, PCs, cassettes, paper, printers and so on, and I would like to see more of us producing our own goods with even less restriction from the means of production, but this is very hard to achieve. I'm interested in people's ideas on this one. Doing a cheap CD sampler isn't enough - I want to control the means of production too!!

MIKE PHYTE
GOOD CLEANFUN & PHYTE RECORDS
WASHINGTON DC, USA

I think it's too hard to say "DIY vs. Major Label" because you're skipping SO MANY steps in between. For instance, the band I tour manage, THE (INTERNATIONAL) NOISE CONSPIRACY is hardly what one would think of as a traditional DIY band, but they are not on a major either (they're on Burning Heart in Europe and Epitaph in the US). I think DIY is something that should be at the foundation of all punk, hardcore, etc. bands. I think of GOOD CLEAN FUN as a very DIY band. We booked two world tours ourselves (of course we had help from friends and other scene affiliated people), put out our own records and called all of the shots ourselves. However, I think that we could have easily benefitted from the help of others. Even now we've decided to have Equal Vision Records release a "discography" CD because Phyte Records doesn't have the distribution that EVR does. When we were touring the world it was hard NOT to be able to come to our shows and find our records, but now that we've stopped touring on that level, it's nice that the kids who email us saying they can't find our records will be able to find them. Back to (I)NC. As I said, I don't think they're a DIY band, but since all of them have been in DIY bands, they know how to handle things on their own. They may have the help of a bigger label, bigger booking agency and be accessible to more people because of this, but they are able to pull it off with decency, due to their understanding of the DIY scene. This issue has been around forever, and I don't think it will ever go away. It is very weird to see a band that you booked or saw in a basement 5 years ago now on MTV, or with a $20 CD and $15 door price for shows.

It is more of a sell out to quit your band or lifestyle just to spend the majority of your waking hours working a job that promotes something you don't really believe in...

ever the fuck you want with it.

If you're going to put your time, money,

Am I supposed to not listen to my favorite music because one name and not another is on the spine and it will upset some spotty 16 year old who doesn't understand basic economics?

But I think that the bands have to be able to do what THEY want. And until you're in a position to criticize (due to your own experiences, etc.), it would be more beneficial to the bands if you gave them your support or just quit listening to them altogether.

CARISSA VAN DEN BERK CLARK
SCREAMS FROM INSIDE FANZINE
MISSOURI, USA

I saw a 50's pick-up passing by and could just imagine myself on it, coming home, feeling that if I could dare to hitchhike, I could dare to do just about anything. I was tormenting myself with regret over all the things I never had the balls to do. Mexico seems like a galaxy away at this point. I had seen Marcos on the Zocolo of Mexico City. It was so hot but I carried on for the hours it took to hear him speak. People were so hot that they clapped when a cloud covered us, probably with more excitement than when Marcos spoke because we sat for five hours in this unforgiving sun, through Indian rituals and ten speakers saying basically the same things. When it was all over, Marcos got the key to the city and the people parted from the Zocolo as if there had been an explosion. The spectacle had ended but the fight continues. Two days ago, I was standing like a sardine in one of the biggest zocolos in the world and now I am sitting on an Ikea couch trying to decipher whether or not I actually enjoyed JAWBREAKER's last album. I never bought it when it came out because honestly, I was really disappointed in them at the time. At the time, the punk scene seemed so much emptier to me and things like that seemed so much more important. It's amazing what a few inspirational ideas and people can do. Every time I begin to feel the bitterness and apathy of my generation (The X Generation), I think about how the Zapatistas, a bunch of indigenous people who no one knew existed had inspired millions of activists throughout the world. In an interview in Process, a good leftist magazine in Mexico, Marcos spoke about holding an indigenous baby who died because he couldn't get an aspirin. A fucking aspirin would have saved his life. Enough is enough - ya basta ya basta, and they changed a nation. The PRI no longer has the control it used to, corruption has lessened, there is a sense of hope and optimism, the indigenous people have a definite identity and life for them is changing. A little fucking movement. It's amazing what an inspirational person adds to the entire context of a situation.

AL QUINT
SUBURBAN VOICE FANZINE
MASSACHUSETS, USA

My opinion on the whole DIY vs. major thing has changed somewhat over the years. I used to not care so much... these days, as I've re-embraced the DIY ethic more and more, I want little to do with the mainstream music machinery. That doesn't mean I'll never listen to a major label record again - after all, they still put out some excellent reissues and almost all of my favorite music I listened to growing up came out on those labels. But it was a different time, for sure. These days, almost all of the music I love and enjoy comes out on indie labels. The majors don't have anything to offer me... they just offer watered-down versions of whatever is trendy at the moment - they're falling all over themselves to find the next BLINK 182. Once in a great while, a good record may slip out on a major, but it's rare. I think the larger issue is that I don't like the crass marketing efforts, anymore - "street teams," cookie-cutter interview sessions, corporate-sponsored tours (i.e., Warped), pay-to-play CD comps put out by certain zines. And these elements are as much a part of certain indie labels, both large and small, as much as major labels, these days. Just because it's indie doesn't mean it's pure. For a lot of smaller labels, business school principles are just as readily applied. I write about music that I love. I don't want to be a part of anyone's marketing plan. Sure, I rely on advertising and take ads from larger indie labels but don't allow them to exert pressure on me to cover their acts. I just do my thing and if they don't like it, too fuckin' bad. Unlike many of the glossy zines, I actually seek out records on my own - I even review some records that I PAID for. The DIY scene is healthier than it's been in years... it makes it easier to just ignore the mainstream. It'll never be completely co-opted because there will be enough people to stop them at the door and tell them to take a hike. Make sense?

JEROEN
COALITION RECORDS
DEN HAAG, NETHERLANDS

Coalition Records is run by me (Jeroen) and Marcel. When we put out our first 7" we both had different names for our labels (the first few releases came out under the name Kaal / Leftwing Records). We didn't even intend to start a label. Our goal was to put out records for bands that we felt close to as people, to their music and their ideas. So we started with 7"s for LARM (Netherlands), SEEIN' RED (Netherlands) and SEA SHEPHERD (France), since we were friends with all these people. Obviously by the choice of the bands and (at least half) of the label names we felt connected and supportive to the more political DIY side of the hardcore scene. This all started more than 8 years ago and meanwhile Coalition has become a full time occupation for both me and Marcel with almost 50 releases under our belt. I think we certainly made compromises to some level. Mostly by using a few bigger (independent) distributors that are not strictly connected to the hardcore scene. But we still run the label in a grassroots way. There are no exclusive distribution deals made, no outrageous prices charged, no desire to try and immitate the world of big corporated music industry (as many labels try to act like such these days), we work with a lot of small distro's and still don't even use contracts with our bands. I don't like the tendency in the hardcore scene that labels try to imitate the big music industry as much as possible, degrading the bands they sign to just another product to sell. Of course, you can start throwing stones at me now, since in a way Coalition is also involved in marketing, which starts the minute you send out promos to magazines. But what I mean is that more and more labels seem to actively hunt for the next big hype, or use mainstream press

Just because it's indie doesn't mean it's pure. For a lot of smaller labels, business school principles are just as readily applied.

you should be able to do what-

blood, sweat and tears into a band...

Their job is to make money, if they sell good or bad music, attitude, revolution or any type of fashion - it's all good (for them) as long as it makes profit.

or distribution as soon as the chance occurs. Going for the fast and optimal investment in another new product. Hardcore has become huge over the past few years, which is not a negative thing per se. But with the internet it is so accessible, that a lot of the kids that enter the scene probably see it as something that is nice to play around with for 3 years before they hop on to something else, just because it looks are cool or the music appeals to them.

DOLF HERMANNSTEDTER
TRUST FANZINE
GERMANY

Someone can be against the record industry for similar reasons that someone is against big industry of any type... I think the major labels are just doing their job. Their job is to make money, if they sell good or bad music, attitude, revolution or any type of fashion - it's all good (for them) as long as it makes profit. They don't care for music, style or attitude, they care for what sells. People working at major labels (be it bands or A&R's, promoters, etc.), are just doing a job - some of these people are very nice, do their job good or used to come from some underground / DIY background, but they are doing a job. They do what they do in order to make more money for the company and to earn their salary. If this job is any better or worse than working at Daimler Chrysler or Lufthansa, can be discussed - but it has nothing to do with with DIY / Underground. Therefore it can not be compared. If your band is major, you are doing a job, that's it. Period. You are gone from the underground. Which does not mean that the music has to be bad, or the people are bad. Here at Trust Fanzine we do review major label releases and also talk to their bands, we even accept ads. We treat it just like everything else - if someone is interested in a band, the person can talk to the band, if the CD fits our frame (or not), if someone wants to review it, okay. If there is cool people working in the ad department that want to spread some money to us, we accept ads (if their content is okay) - and of course we don't do favours in return. If fanzines are not doing that, cool. They are businesses that do influence culture (mainstream that is), we're a culture that also needs to do business. Don't let them fool you.

ANDREA VALENTINI
TOO MUCH JUNKIE BUSINESS ZINE
ITALY

I've always been a really DIY type... anything I ever did was like this and I don't regret a single thing. Anyway, I used to be a lot more upfront and adamant about the issue of DIY vs major... right now, maybe because I got older, it doesn't really bother me so much. Sure, majors are evil and greedy - they usually just exploit you, chew you up and spit you out... but basically it's just up to you if you want to fall in their mouths or not, when you get to the point where a major is interested in what you're doing. So, I guess, anyone is free to choose and, to be 100% honest, I think I'd consider signing a contract if someone offered it to me... just to see what happens. And then, come on: in the end the DEAD BOYS, RAMONES, SEX PISTOLS and STOOGES all were on major labels...

CHRIS DODGE
SLAP-A-HAM RECORDS
CALIFORNIA, USA

Who cares. That's my opinion. They are both involved in music, but that's where the similarities end. It seems that most people who feel threatened by major labels and are violently opposed to them are in bands who would never be on major labels anyhow, so really, who gives a fuck? Of course I prefer DIY over big business for all of the obvious reasons and I'd easily rather give a dollar to a grassroots company than a corporation... but comparing DIY labels to major labels is like comparing Little League players to professional athletes - they play the same game but they're in completely different ballparks. If a band I likes decides to go to a major label, the only thing that I care about is if their next album is any good. If they change their style only to appeal to the masses, then screw 'em. If they're still good, then they're still good. If some band wants to try to be rock stars, let them. Aren't there enough fucking DIY DISCHARGE, MOB 47, BRONSON etc. clones to keep you happy so that if one defects to "the dark side" we'll never notice they're gone? For the longest time I've thought "DIY vs. major" was one of the dumbest issues to debate. Miles Davis isn't on a DIY label, George Benson isn't on a DIY label, neither is OZZY, nor THE BEATLES, nor early VAN HALEN, nor THE KINKS, and not even the BEACH BOYS. Am I supposed to not listen to my favorite music because one name and not another is on the spine of the record and it will upset some spotty 16 year old who doesn't understand basic economics? If so, that truly would be selling out!

REMI CHAUMAT
MODERN CITY RECORDS
LYON, FRANCE

We want to do things on our own terms with our own work ethics. We still naively (want to) believe in the existence of an "underground community". Of course we need to make money to pay the rent but this is not our main purpose with the label. We actually do not make money from the label itself. We started making buttons, stickers and t-shirts so we could bring in some money and still be able to put out whatever we liked. That's what DIY is all about to us. Do your own thing, your own way. Everyone is expecting you and driving you to conform and be a perfect consumer. We think there is another way. Creating our business is a way to try and prove it. We think we can do what we do, earn a living from it and still not compromise our ideas. The whole debate about "selling out" is on another level we think and I will not develop on the subject right now. We have never signed a contract and we intend to continue to do so as long as possible. The bands we deal with are all friends of ours. We never felt the need to put anything on paper. If we were ever in the situation where we feel we'd need a contract, then that would probably be a sign we shouldn't be working with that band. What we want to achieve with the label is put out good music, have people buy it, help good bands spread their music and message and make the world a better place. We want to keep doing this without compromising our ideas as long and as much as we can. ■

Everyone is expecting you and driving you to conform and be a perfect consumer. We think there is another way.

ever the fuck you want with it.

MUSICIANS FOR A DECENT LIVING WAGE

MUSICIANS FOR A DECENT LIVING WAGE

<BY DAN MCKEE>

I want to attempt to point out two things in this piece and dispel some dangerously sloppy thinking that has been plaguing punk rock since the beginning of DIY. I hope to show that:

1) There is actually some great music on major labels and being on a major does not immediately mean a band will suck.
2) All bands who "sell out" to majors are not "rock-star" assholes and suckers of Satan's cock and some have perfectly justifiable reasons for doing so. And also a third point:
3) That people, like myself, who believe the former points can still agree with all the arguments against major labels and despise them just the same.

The question of DIY vs Mainstream has never been the black and white issue to me that it seemingly should be for an anti-capitalist punk rocker such as myself, and I think the confusing greyness of that area of ethics comes from the contradictory positions that I take my viewpoint from. I don't look at the distinction and the arguments against major labels and for the DIY underground just from the theoretical and safe position of 'zine writer or audience member who can pass moral edicts from the comfort of my DEAD KENNEDYS postered ivory tower... but also as a musician attempting to function in the sick fucking world in which we find ourselves living in the 21st Century and trying to seek a meaningful life.

Pretty heavy stuff... but that's the way it is with important things and sometimes I think we are too ready to give up on all the necessary hard theoretical work and look at *all* the angles of our problems in our urge to seek comforting, but ultimately hollow, quick fix solutions and answers.

First let's look at the obvious... major label music can and often does suck more ass than the most ass-loving ass-sucker alive. The majority of music found in and around the charts is bland, unoriginal, uninspired, meaningless and unfulfilling dross. This is even more true when the music is supposed to be sold as "alternative" or "punk", which is usually fame-seekers just jumping on the bandwagon of the next new sound and writing passionless music simply to sell and be popular. In fact, if I see another black t-shirt clad pierced and tattooed twenty-something muttering under allegedly angsty breath about the "*feelings inside his brain that bring him so much pain and drive him completely insane*" I will break down and cry at the uselessness of it all!

Worse still, because a major-label record company is usually just a small part of a much larger media conglomerate who owns television, movie, news, publishing, and internet companies, this music, even if it is the lamest, most sterile, soulless and vapid music ever heard by human ears will be heavily promoted and an illusion of success will be formed that will create a self-fulfilling prophecy that leads to the public believing they really need the piece-of-garbage tune when it is released for consumption.

For example, a piece of shit song will be written for a movie, used in all the trailers for that film, then the band will perform the song on television shows made by or on the payroll of the same company who make the film and run the label they are on. Television commercials will also feature the tune if the price is right, and radio stations run by or on the payroll of their company will also start playing the song on their set-lists. Magazines, financially linked to the company, will give the songs favourable reviews and interview the band, and an internet site also run by that company will start giving away MP3s of their songs while their news networks will plug the film and hey presto: suddenly you have a massive hit on your hands as the public are saturated by this song, no matter how bad it is, and buy into the self-created hype surrounding it. The song, a mindless piece of shit, goes down in history, it is played forevermore as a "classic", it appears on countless compilation CDs also made by the same company who put out the original song and is hitherto thought of as a timeless masterpiece. Millions are made, the band who performed the song become renowned as musical geniuses, and meanwhile a billion better songs are written and performed by a billion genuinely creative bands across the world, bands who write their songs not to fit in with a pre-destined box office smash or to a blue-print of current commercial success, but out of an inexplicable inner drive simply to write music and have fun. And these billions of songs, each one much better musically, creatively and artistically than the piece of shit smash hit, are never heard by more than a handful of people.

Major labels do not give two shits about art. They care about what all corporations in a contemporary free-market capitalist system care about: profit. Their reason for existence is the same reason for existence of all corporations: to make money.

A computer company makes its money by selling computers, a car manufacturer by selling cars, and a record label by selling records; pure and simple as HEAR'SAY would no doubt tell you.

They do not care about art because art is not their concern or in anyway relevant to their working... their prime goal is to profit and give shareholders a return on their investment. They are required to do this by law. They are not required by law to give two shits about art, nor do they make money by caring about art.

So music that does not sell is not their concern. Not only music that doesn't sell, but even music that sells, but doesn't sell a lot. A punk rock band that sell 1000 copies of their new CD, while doing well in the UK underground, they are not the concern of a major label when they have acts on their rosters that will shift ten times that in their first week alone! And with profits the main goal as with any company, anything that can be done to downsize as much as possible and curb any wasted expenditure should and shall be done. Why sign a struggling and creative band with four egos who will demand things off you and have their own ideas when you can simply manufacture your own band with four people who will simply do what they are told and owe most of their money to you, their benevolent creators?

The right promotion will sell anything, just look at Will Young! Why waste time with searching for good and original bands through all the shite and mediocre ones playing the pubs and clubs and waste good money on A&R guys, when like Frankenstein you can create your own bands to order (hold the fries)? Why be forced to deal with difficult artistic ideas, requests and demands, when you can just have a marketing team map everything out for you and *tell* your "artist" what it is they are doing, no headaches needed, and get all that money in the bank?

In my opinion, anything that is done solely for money is bullshit. This counts for everything in life. And any record label will tell you; they do what they do simply for money. Sure they make some great music now and again (although seldom in the charts), but if that music were to stop selling, if the band decided to do something unmarketable that might alienate their fan base, then they will be dropped, or shelved, or generally dumped like a bag of old potatoes if they don't bring home the bacon.

And what exactly does bring home the bacon? Ideas don't. Ideas can be alienating. If a band expresses opinions about things, such as politics, religion, philosophy, etc... they might put off those who don't agree with them from buying their CDs, thus limiting their audience and potential market share.

Diversity doesn't either. If a band is too different then some people may not bother sticking with them to see what it is they are trying to do. They might change radio stations or television channels and find a more familiar and safe song. If you scare your audience away then they won't be buying your records, and if you make them think too much then they won't have time to go out and buy the products of all the nice companies that now sponsor you.

Being out of fashion is bad for sales too. Imagine the shame of being a ska-punk band once ska is unpopular and nu-metal is in? Who's going to buy a ska-punk album anymore? Or a nu-metal band when that's out and punk goes through yet another revival? Or what about an 80s-style hair rock band twenty years on? No, you can't write music that is no longer economically viable... again, the audience will feel that you are behind the times and they won't want to waste their money on you and risk missing out on the next big thing!

What brings home the bacon is lowest common denominator drivel that appeals to the majority of people. Simple to digest, nothing too taxing on the mind - just something that goes down easy and gives us a smile; chuck them another banal love song and rehash the chords from last year's hit in a different order. Aspartame art. It is sickly sweet and poisons the brain.

Yes... as an anti-capitalist I can see very clearly what is wrong with major labels and their profit-driven attitude to, or should I say, profit-driven *contempt* to art, and this is just scraping the bottom of the barrel.

Just as I would find it despicable for a company to knowingly cause the death of babies in the Third World just to make money off their product (as a certain chocolate company who in my opinion we should all be boycotting, is alleged to do), I find it grotesque to see art whored to profit *accountants* who have probably never even picked up a guitar in their life, let alone written a song! Who sign bands not based on how much their music rocks, but on how much it will sell.

But saying that... in a world so polluted with corporate domination of most aspects of commerce it is hard to live completely pure of it. While it is easy to boycott some companies who try and sell you needless junk and engage in unethical behaviour whilst doing it... it is harder to boycott a piece of art just because it profits an evil corporation. While out of a choice of foods you can choose the more ethical option and get exactly the same nourishment, or out of a choice of appliances you could choose the one made by the less environmentally damaging company and still have the same product, with art there are no alternatives for it is what it is and imitations are just imitations. If you want to see Michelangelo, you have to visit the Sistine Chapel whether you're religious or not. If you want to read a Clive Barker novel you have to give money to Rupert Murdoch no matter what your feelings towards New International. And if you want to hear that great BEATLES album that reminds you of your childhood and happier days, you have to pay up to EMI. Sure there are other paintings, other books and other music, but if that's the one you want then tough shit because with art it is all or nothing. You can buy all the love songs you want from the indies, but if you want to hear that particular NICK CAVE song that you and the love of your life had your first kiss to, the song that you have psychologically related to all these good times in your life, then you have no real choice but to cough up to Time Warner.

As a musician and music fan, I still buy records on major labels from artists who I still respect for what they do musically. Beyond the chart drivel and other cash-in, soulless, maggot-wank music by numbers, there is still a lot of good stuff from other genres of music that is unfortunately only available on a major. Let's forget MP3s and tape copying because somewhere along the way *someone* has bought this record from the major to enable the bootlegging.

It is easy to be ethically pure with your music buying habits if your tastes in music are purely DIY punk rock because all the music you desire is available on non-major affiliated indies. But when you are someone like me, who sees punk as something more than just its music, and punk music as just a small part of the entire spectrum of music that influences, inspires, enlightens and entertains you, then it is harder. I like jazz, metal, blues, soul, rock, classical, rap, and all kinds of other stuff that I find hard to pin down genre-wise. Music speaks a language to me and it is something that makes me feel like nothing else. I simply love music, many kinds of music. I respect it as an art form and take pleasure, motivation, and sometimes guidance from the music I listen to. And the thing is, when you come away from the charts, there is a lot of great stuff that is, sadly, on a major label or its affiliates. I will not deny myself the art of those I respect simply because it is on a major label. Good art is too important for that.

For example, keeping in punk rock, yes it sucked that BAD RELIGION signed to Sony... but people who decided that all their major label releases were bad simply because they were on a major are just making an unsubstantiated knee-jerk reaction. In my opinion "The Gray Race" is one of the best BAD RELIGION albums ever made, right up there with their Epitaph's "holy trinity" of "Suffer", "No Control" and "Against The Grain", and a true classic. "Stranger Than Fiction" too. "No Substance" had some awesome songs on it in places, and while I would concede "The New America" as mainly a waste of time, the fact is, on a major label, BAD RELIGION still wrote some good shit, and as their gazillionth album, maybe "The New America" was just due to jadedness or a failed attempt at experimentation rather than its being on a major?

And I dare anyone to look me in the eye and tell me that SOCIAL DISTORTION's awesome "White Light..." album sucks just because it is on Sony! It sucks *that* it is on Sony, but the album itself and the music on it does not suck in any way shape or form.

The thing is though... as I said, I can see that major labels suck for a lot of reasons, and while it is fair enough that my jazz, rock, soul etc is on a major label because those forms of music don't really have a unified subculture and corresponding code of ethics based in a correlative political theory that offers any alternatives to the mainstream... isn't it inexcusable for a supposedly "punk" band to sign to one? I mean, QUEEN knew no better and neither did poor old MEATLOAF. Miles Davis is dead, Billie Holliday from a different time, while the BLUE OYSTER CULT were inventing heavy metal they probably didn't have time to think about releasing their own records and last I checked there wasn't a secret underground collective for orchestral musicians performing and recording DIY versions of Beethoven's symphonies. These guys had nothing to sell out from, but BAD RELIGION? GREEN DAY? THE OFFSPRING? SOCIAL DISTORTION? They had the underground damn it! A viable alternative to that corporate mainstream shit! They didn't *need* to sell out?

Because to my understanding punk is supposed to be exactly that. An alternative. Do It Yourself is exactly what it says on the tin... it is us taking control of our lives without interference from these kind of corrupting money-hungry media conglomerates. It is, to go all Marxist, us taking control the products of our labour and Doing It Ourselves! We publish our own literature, create our own scenes, release our own records, support our own artists, put on our own shows... it is run for the punks by the punks, one culture under rock, and we don't need to get involved in that payola riddled artless *crapola*.

And usually this is where the argument ends... and this is where, for anyone in the scene who is not a musician or other type of artist, the conclusion seems obvious. Corporations are bad (Mmm'kay). Punk is anti-corporations and

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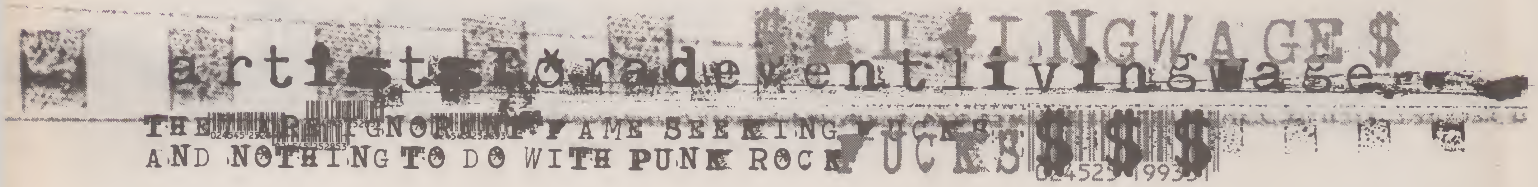
has created an alternative to all the shite that corporations bring... therefore, a punk band wouldn't sign to a corporate label. Simple as that, forget about it, you can stick a fork in it; this argument is done, and goodnight Irene!

But if it's so fucking simple how come it keeps on happening? And how come all we have as a response is to point a finger and cry "rock star sell-out hypocrite", before excommunicating the band from our scene and pushing them further into the complete grasp of the corporates?

Punk, a community so welcoming of artists of all types, of our painters, our collagists, our writers, our poets and yet our most ubiquitous breed: the musician, seems barely understood!

You see... first off is the simple and shitty fact that comes from living in a capitalist culture: music costs money. Instruments, amps, strings, skins, picks, sticks, straps, mikes, pedals, practices, petrol, touring, recording, releasing records, promoting gigs and albums... it all costs money. And not just a little bit of money either. If you write music, not just for some drunken fun on a Friday night (not that there's anything wrong with doing that!), but genuinely because as a musician you want to create something new and meaningful out of sound then you will not just want to get by... you will not just want *a* guitar, you will want a *good* guitar that sounds the way you need it to sound... you will not just want *a* recording, you will want a *decent* recording, one that is not rushed because everything is on the clock, but one that you can work on with loving care and realise your musical vision in full.


artists for a decent living wage
INGWAGE$
THEY ARE IGNORANT FAME SEEKING FUCKS
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This sounds very pretentious in a scene that prides itself on the fact that anyone can make this music... but it is a fact. Some people simply care more about their music, it is not just a fun hobby to them, though it is fun, it is their art, their passion, and it is what defines them as people and makes sense of the world for them. There is nothing wrong with these people, just as there is nothing wrong with those who simply do it as a fun hobby. Unfortunately the art costs money... and a musical album costs a lot more than a set of paints or box of pens.

Now, while the DIY underground has labels, venues, media, promoters etc... it is extremely hard to earn any decent amount of money for your endeavours. I am not talking about massive and obscene rock star earnings so you can afford you stylist, your lawyers, your accountants, your personal assistants, your technicians, your physical trainers and buy your 120 room mansion, seventeen cars, big screen digital TV, DVD player, product research charts, personal spa and a swimming pool in the shape of a flying V guitar... I am talking the basic money to fund your music. To buy you new strings, to cover the costs of your album, your gigs etc. Often in the DIY underground it is impossible to break even on these things, *essential* things to continue with your music. I'm just twenty years old, I've only been in a band for seven years, and already I have spent thousands and thousands of pounds on essential things for my music whilst meanwhile making over those same seven years about £500 at *most* back! That leaves me still thousands in debt, and that's just me out of a band with three other members in similar situations! And we are not alone... this happens to everyone who cares abut their music. Being a DIY punk band is indubitably a very costly exercise.

If you are a musician who cares about your music and wants to write and record songs that you are proud of and that sound exactly as you want them to then it costs a hell of a lot because the music business is the most rip-off business around and full of a lot of unscrupulous people. It is also a technology dependent art, which leaves it open to exploitation. A writer can write anywhere, a painter can paint on anything, but a musician... to get the sound exactly how you want it you are at the mercy of technology...the equipment in the studio you use, the amount of tracks you have, the instruments you play with... and all of them cost stupid prices.

The reason bands "sell-out" is simple... and in most cases has nothing to do with being a "rock star" and wanting gluttonous wealth and a crack addiction. It simply has to do with finding meaning in life.

A musician wants to write and record music; it's what they live for. I know it's what I live for and I wouldn't deny it to anyone. I am at my happiest playing music. Now calling myself a musician is not meant to elevate my status from anyone else's in anyway, and the way I see it, anyone who plays and writes music is a musician. I don't read music, I have no clue as to what the strings on my bass guitar mean, what notes I sing, and I even tune my bass totally abnormally and play simply from sound and memory... but I'm a fucking musician! Alongside writing, it's how I express myself; my ideas, my emotions... and I have no shame in considering myself an artist or anyone else who does the same.

So, as music is what I love to do, as music is the air I breathe and the water I drink, I would fucking love to be able to live off my music. To be able to afford the studio time, the tour money, the strings etc to make my music sound as it should, and *also* afford to be able to eat, live somewhere and maybe have some warmth? We never call it selling out when a writer wants to live off their writing, or a painter from their painting... we understand. But a *musician*? Forget about it!

The simple fact is, except for a very few exceptions, it is damn near impossible to live off your music in DIY. For fuck's sakes, most labels won't even pay for your recording, let alone affording you a decent living wage!

And so at the end of the day, we have bands jumping to majors, in my opinion not because they seek fame, fortune and adulation... but because their options in the world are either a) work a shitty job that you hate to fund your true love: music or b) "sell out", and be able to pay for all your stupid musical expenses, be able to afford to concentrate fully on what you love instead of only being able to fit it in during the odd spaces of free time you have from work and the rest of your life, and generally be lucky enough to earn your living doing what you love in life.

Sure not all bands sign up for this reason... some just want their mugs on the cover of Kerrang and their video on constant rotation on that beacon of banality MTV2. Fame for the sake of being famous. They *do* want the rock'n'roll lifestyle, and they are ignorant fame-seeking fucks and nothing to do with punk rock.

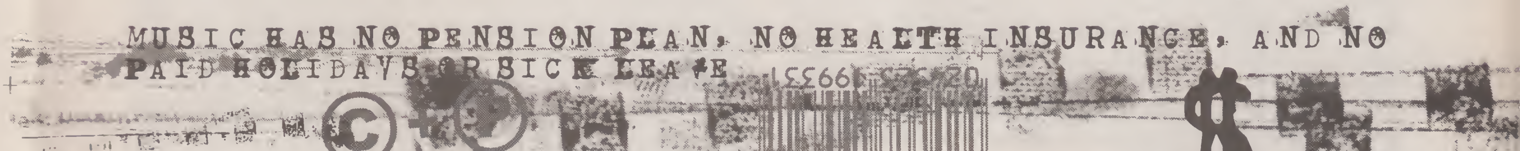
But not *everyone* signs up for that reason, and in my opinion punk bands primarily do not. I mean *real* punk bands here, not the bands that simply use the scene as a stepping-stone straight to the majors and who would have been part of any other scene that would have helped make them popular if one was around. But a *real* punk band, who have worked hard within the scene, who have done so much for so long and truly are a part of the culture... they will sometimes reach a simple dichotomy in their lives... DIY doesn't pay the bills so do I either sell myself out and work for a major corporation doing something I hate, or I sell myself out to a major corporation doing something I love for them and something that would make me happy. And I bet these people would happily *not* sign to a major if there was a similarly economically viable independent alternative, but right now, except for a few "big" indies (who get unwarranted shit all the time for being too like majors anyway) there just aren't many DIY labels where you can afford to be a musician. Especially in the UK.

Music has no pension plan as it is, no health insurance, and no paid holidays or sick leave. It doesn't even have a minimum wage and in DIY it's worse, the music doesn't even always pay for itself!

Is it really surprising that in a world where everything has a price, even basic human needs such as food and shelter, and where we *have* to make money somehow, people want to do it in a way that is creative and meaningful to them rather than struggle to earn enough?

I know I ideally wouldn't like to sign up to a major label, and let's be honest, with the lyrics I write (too alienating, too political) and music (too weird, too hard to pigeonhole) I doubt they'd come knocking too fast... but I *would* like to be able to live off my music because it is what I love to do, what I am good at, and something that I have a very real need to do, and at the end of the day, although I would prefer to do this without compromise and within the DIY underground, if push came to shove I would have less of a problem working as a band on Sony and doing what I love, than working in a shop mindlessly selling televisions and CD players for them!

We need to understand more within the punk community that instead of putting "selling out" down to mere greed and unscrupulous morals, there are totally understandable reasons that some bands sign those contracts and if we want that to change then we need to work towards improving some things within the scene so that we can provide what our bands need instead of losing them and then rejecting them so they have no choice but to stick with the majors. We also need to recognize the distinction between artists who simply want to live from their art and would ideally love to do this within the scene, and people who make a living by feigning as artists and wanting to use the scene. I am in no way advocating a band who are told by some greasy manager that "alternative" (what does this mean-alternative to what?) music is where it's at right now and so they play what they think will sell, sign up to a major, do exactly what the company tells them to and generally behave as guitar playing, unit-shifting, walking billboard prostituting puppets. But I am saying that in my opinion it is no crime for a band who have worked for years struggling in the DIY underground and just getting further and further into debt to want to make a living instead of a continual loss.


MUSIC HAS NO PENSION PLAN, NO HEALTH INSURANCE, AND NO
PAID HOLIDAYS OR SICK LEAVE
POINT FINGER AND CRY ROCK STAR SELLOUT HYPOCRITE

What we need to do within the punk rock community is make our supposedly viable alternative to the mainstream, a genuinely viable alternative. We need to make it such that decent hardworking musicians do not have to jump to some major media conglomerate just to be able to afford simply to survive. The ones who want the millions, the specially painted dressing rooms, the outrageous made to order buffets, the dazzling laser-light shows and the twenty-five quid a head tickets to see their shows; they can fuck right off, we don't want them, we don't need them, and by the sound of it they are nothing to do with the punk culture and are just using us all. But our artists who just want to get by and be able to create and perform their art whilst maintaining a roof over their heads and food in their cupboards, if we want to hold onto them and prevent them from selling out then we have to see our own responsibility for the current attractiveness of majors compared to the poverty of being a musician in DIY and do something about it.

There is a difference between wanting a decent living and wanting the disgusting wealth of pop-stars and we need to recognize that and understand that. It is not profits themselves that are evil (well, it *is*, but in a capitalist society they are a sadly unavoidable evil until the revolution) it is absurd and greedy amounts of profits and the sickening and egocentric notion of superstardom and the ideas of superiority it brings that sucks. To charge £17 for a CD so you can afford your luxury double-decker tour-bus, five star hotel room and all the room-service you can consume is unnecessary and wrong... to want to make enough so your band can afford to tour without running out of petrol and be able to eat a meal each night is not.

It just shouldn't be the case that bands we love and respect can't even be guaranteed to make back their travel expenses to a gig. That in some cases the idea of being paid for a show is actually *laughable* is ridiculous in a scene that prides itself on opposing exploitation, and that very few record labels actually offer to even *help* pay for the band's recording costs leaves the majority of labels, to bands with no money, fairly redundant notions.

It is a simple revolutionary idea... to do it ourselves, but we need to follow the idea through to its logical conclusions and do it ourselves in a way that thrives and creates a real alternative that maintains itself and retains its artists. We need to have our own labels, promotions, etc that are not only our own, but that to a certain extent equal those of the majors. When a label becomes as big as Fat Wreck or Epitaph, we need to stop blaming them for getting so big, but instead work at having more of our own labels that can support its bands as well as themselves so bands who care about their music can have someplace to go *without* selling out. We can run our own big labels that can reject all the bullshit of the majors: the marketing, the payola, the profits uber alles; whilst embracing the good and useful aspects of them such as paying for a band's recording, offering tour support, and making the bands records fairly easy to find. We can start better DIY distributors, our own booking companies etc so that our bands not only have records out and gigs to play, but they don't get into debt by doing it.

Bands selling out in punk are just like the NHS workers who move to private practices because the government can't be fucked to put any money into healthcare and pay them a decent living even though we *need* these NHS workers and the workers themselves would rather work for the NHS if they could. Just as the government needs to invest in healthcare, we need to invest in what is important to us instead of letting our bands feel like criminals if they earn a living doing what they love and making the grim norm be massive debt for those we supposedly respect and criticism if they want more than that!

Until we start having the guts to recognize and respect our music as art, the importance of that art in our lives, the cost of that art to our artists who entertain and affect us with their art, and decriminalize the notion of people wanting to earn a living from their art (while maintaining the proper disgust at those who blatantly fake "art" for profit and the companies who sell us that shit), we will continue to be lacking as a real alternative to the mainstream, continue alienating bands who want nothing more than a life doing what they enjoy and are talented at, and these bands will continue "selling out" as a desperation manoeuvre in a world where frankly, *without* the alternative that we *should* be providing as musicians or music fans ourselves who want to keep our scene free of the corrupting grasp of the majors, the life options as a punk-rock musician are bleak and signing to a major is for some, the only feasible way, no matter how unappetising on many levels, of earning a living doing what they enjoy and do best.

Is someone selling out more when they get to spend their life doing what they love and are best at, or when they forsake their passion simply to earn some money doing something they hate? And are we ultimately selling ourselves out in the punk scene by not making the effort to understand and improve the conditions of our vital musicians who make punk rock, and the DIY underground as awesome as it is; preferring to cry "sell-out" rather than opening our eyes and minds to creating better ethical and DIY alternatives that meet the needs of our bands, and that would make their "selling out" unnecessary? I don't know exactly *how* we'd go about this monumental task, but unless we begin admitting the problem and start talking about it rationally and not just in emotive knee-jerks then it will plague us and continue to impede punk's impact as an alternative to the mainstream. ■

YOUTH CULTURE FOR SALE

THE DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD

HEADS THEY WIN...

So those corporate foxes have been sniffing around the chicken coup of subculture again have they? Look out the window; everyone's thinks they're 'Punk' or 'Hardcore' now. 'Punk Rock' is mainstream youth culture. Always on the superficial level of fashion alone, everything's been stolen for the last twenty five years, and sold back 'dilute to taste' over and over again, we all know that. Nothing is sacred. There's now a million prime specimens walking around in their disco gear, ready for nite club action, all sporting mohicans (well half of one, combed up in the middle). The very same people who would've poured scorn, hatred and ridicule on you in the not-so-distant-past, are now wearing your haircut. The mainstream media and companies have finally caught on, they know how to get instant street credibility for their new Rock acts, their boy bands or their new range of clothing or breakfast cereal, however dire it is. Of course, there is still great, untouchable music, culture, writing and art that they'll never find out about, past, present and future (hopefully), but now more than ever, Punk Rock is wide open, like a gaping wound, ripe for the carrion, and the knock-on effect is it's polarising 'the scene'.

I've said for quite some time now that there should be a division. Bands, labels, zines, promoters, people - declare your intentions! Get off the fucking fence, lay down your allegiance, put your hands in the air and back away nice and slow. It is the time for those who are looking to long-term 'career opportunities' via possible corporate involvement or co-operation, and even assimilation into the machine once their business has grown to an adequate viability, to fuck right off and join their traffic. You've talked the talked for quite long enough, but sooner or later that affected walk is going to give your game away. Let's put it this way; do you find this debate uncomfortable? Does my opinion seem negative? Do I come across as a tiresome bore tied down in the romanticism of the past? Are people who are still passionate about politicism or just these issues merely childish anachronisms? If you answered yes to any of those questions, maybe it's time you questioned why you're still here. Maybe it's time for that little shove into the 'real world' rather than milking this reliable old cash cow? Just how far do you think you would get there? Exactly.

I'd rather stay a child, and keep my self-respect, if being an adult means being like you.

I understand that to a lot of people life is just a succession of flags of convenience. You know, when you're in college, you empathise with socialism when Dads' allowance runs out. But when Dad secures that career, and you have money and security, you suddenly find yourself sympathising with economic policy that excludes the poor. The vast majority of people are fickle and shallow, and in the same way as they one day find themselves voting for right wing policies, they too may suddenly find themselves apologists for making rock videos or corporate sponsorship. It's all selling out. Peoples' standpoints and beliefs are usually determined by their present conditions. Case in point: Q. Will 99.9% of Political Punk/Hardcore/Thrash bands ever face the decision of signing to a major label and/or receive widespread commercial success in any way? A. Not likely. So are they railing against multinationals because they are really truly opposed to them, or because doing so helps them gain acceptance within the norms of accepted opposition? Y'see, there are 'poseurs' on both sides of the fence.

It's the little things you notice that speak the loudest. And one of those is the gig flyers, music adverts and other promotional paraphenalia. For nigh on twenty years people would quote MRR reviews to promote their product, then it changed in the U.K. a few years ago to Fracture reviews, and now it's suddenly fucking Kerrang! or NME reviews... ha ha sucked in, you play your part by accepting them and their (misinformed) opinion! It's the same as in every big sporting event, the Coca Cola hoarding will always change to the colours of whichever teams are playing, one on either side of the field! And that's capitalism; "We don't care whose colours we carry or whose flag we're flying, as long as it SELLS!" So when you're tempted to take your band, label or idea into that arena - never forget that if you want to play their game, you must play by their rules, and just as soon as it's last weeks' news, so too you will join the rest of the hopefuls in the dustbin of history. Capitalism cares as much about economic casualties as it does about civilian ones. So don't come crying when it all goes horribly wrong. And if this is the game and the rules by which you want to play now, remember that they are the only winners. They'll tell you that you are the best, they'll kiss your arse, they'll tell you any shit you want to hear... when you're on the way up. But when you're on the way down, you'll suddenly find yourself very alone and out in the cold. And please remember to bear in mind how you treat people when you're on the way up, because those same people will be there when you're on your way back down again. Like life itself, it's all so very transient and temporary.

What's wrong with having it good for a change?... You can have a little taste of the good life too, now I know you want it, hell everybody does. What's the threat? We all sell out everyday, might as well be on the winning team!

I see bands setting out to gain popularity and a 'fanbase' by utilising the Independent network as a stepping-stone and nothing more. I see people actually buying, listening to, and giving credence to some of this music, but when I hear it, I just close my eyes, take it out of the 'Punk Rock' context and funnily enough, all I hear is rock music with equally vapid lyrics and ideas (The big question regarding mainstream success, selling out and popularity though is; does cream rise or does shit float?) I see promoters who still have the gall to list themselves in these pages as 'D.I.Y.' but who are promoting huge rock events, ripping off bands and 'punters' and developing a crude and ruthless manner in the way they treat and deal with people. I see labels pretending to be 'Independent' but using business practices straight from cut-throat capitalism. But worse, I see bands not even getting paid recording costs, or barely petrol money, when these labels and promoters are walking away with more and more to promote their own interests. I know we're not supposed to talk about this, we're supposed to expect to eat shit and like it, otherwise WE'LL be called the sellouts by daring to ask for a little return on our outgoings. But people are lying and people are being lied to. Yes it's gone on since day one, over and over again, but it doesn't make it alright.

Maybe 'the scene' could hold an in-house witch trial, Fracture could print the results in the form of a blacklist, we could have huge LP and CD burning parties, and then consign all those bands and labels to be made to wear the sign of the sellout, the dreaded $ or £ sign on their clothing. Who comes and goes within the Punk Rock ghetto would be our decision, and undesirables would be treated accordingly. First to go into our 'venues' would be the emo and ska bands ("don't worry, it's only a soundcheck!") And no-one will ever need to know. It would be our very own vinyl solution for our Reich'n'Roll. I'm joking of course, but you can see what I'm getting at right? Just what CAN we do?

TAILS WE LOSE...

At this point the Punk scene had become very in-bred and cliquish. There was a lot of talk about who was a "poseur" and who wasn't. Commitment and sincerity were essential, and one had to have Punk credibility to join the clan. In a way it was a self-destructive protectiveness. Many kids who were eager to get into this new music felt rejected... and even though there was always talk of how to make Punk break through the limited music scene barriers, the in-crowd syndrome of the Punk scene kept it isolated. It was a private party, and if your hair was too long, or if you wore flares, or you liked the wrong bands, you were not invited.

When you're growing up, your perspective is in a constant state of flux, but once you've gone through the stage of rebelling against your par-

IT'S NOT A BUSINESS TO ME, ALL I CARE ABOUT'S BEING FREE. I THOUGHT PUNK MEANT THINGS HAD CHANGED, BUT THE FUCKING SONG REMAINS
FUCK, YOU JUST KEEP SHELLING OUT THE BUCKS, 'CAUSE ALL IT IS TO YOU IS JUST ANOTHER BASH. BUT IT'S NOT A BUSINESS TO ME, I DON'T
JUST ANOTHER WAY OF TRYING TO BE HIP. 13.50 TICKETS AND NARROW FUCKING MINDS, ARE SOME OF THE THINGS I THOUGHT WE LEFT BEHIND.
BABE... I RULE THIS TOWN WITH AN IRON FIST, BABE, BABE..." JUST ANOTHER NAME FOR STYLE, JUST ANOTHER NAME FOR STUFF TO
STILL A BUNCH OF FUCKING SHEEP. AND YOU'LL BE SORRY THAT YOU DIDN'T TAKE A STAND, LET IT BECOME JUST ANOTHER SCAM. YOU'LL BE

The liberal press, on the other hand, tried to defang the beast, ignore the political and cultural cries for change, and try to do the Big Amoeba Dance: absorb an angry flurry of ferment and transform it into a nice, safe consumable fad based on nothing more weighty than hairdos, fashion and the revival of various retro musical styles... And not unexpectedly, the upper strata of society took the drama and excitement from movement in the underside layers and used it to sell products to the middle.

ents, then your peer group, then society and the world at large, you hit a threshold where things remain a constant. You should have hopefully developed your own value system, and you continue to live by them. The problem is, most people tend to forget to review certain things and get stuck in a tape-loop. They got to a point around their late teens / early 20s where they had rebelled fully against their peer group but also found acceptance within a new one (be it Punk Rock or whatever), the next stage; to consolidate security within that new peer group is to invoke that in-crowd clique, look down your nose and poke fun at those who are obviously clueless about what you all know to be cool. But when you're in your late 20s / early 30s, and you're still doing this, isn't it about time for that little review?

What I'm getting at, is it's far too easy to forget what it's like to be on the outside, to be young or to be naive, and even easier to criticise and look down your nose at others. I feel pretty damn privileged and lucky to have found what I was looking for to be passionate about, and creative with, at an early age. And yeah, I could easily say that everyone under the age of say, twenty is a clueless twat because they listen to emo or ska, and I could explain how I was listening to the 'real' music that seminally inspired those modern day styles when they were in nappies. But I would just look like a jaded old prick who's forgotten what it's like. I know that, and you should too. Younger people in 'the scene' today grew up in a different world; if you talk to them about the impact of the Reagan and Thatcher regimes in the 1980's, it means about as much to them as your Dad telling you about Wilson or Nixon. Forcing them to listen to some obscure old Hardcore Punk 7"s is (for the most part) going to be as excruciating as your oldies enthusiastically spinning you those DOORS or WINGS discs.

Your Wisdom, Our Youth

That said, you're not going to convert anyone by shouting at them and slapping burgers out of their hands because they went into MacDonalds. The Punk scene now is as full of contradictions and double standards as it ever was, and that's not just because it's an 'adolescent' scene, it's because it's also inhabited by a lot of older people who never 'grew up'. I bet those same people at that MacDonalds crusade wouldn't think twice about slagging off fundamentalist hardline straight edgers slapping beers out of peoples' hands across the pond. Don't get me wrong, shopping at MacDonalds, is retarded, but it's a question of communication or isolation... If you want people to pick up the ideas and ethics you're espousing and continue the tradition long after you're gone, then lead by example; sitting in the corner in an arms-crossed sulk because 'the kids' are selling out is going to change absolutely fuck all. People aren't going to warm to a bunch of negative old arseholes looking aloof in a huddle at the bar at the back of the gig, they're going to walk away and make their own scene. And maybe that's what this whole sellout thing is all about; the young rebelling against the old, the kickback? The backlash? Maybe all they see in our rulebook are the cathedrals of institution, and in their own way, as did we, so do they want to tear it down. Maybe we're the 'Hippies' now? Or maybe they just don't know there IS another way because no-one fucking bothered to talk to them, preferring instead to categorise them for their t-shirt as clueless and stupid. Someone once said that in spite of the myth, men in fact do not acquire wisdom with age, but merely learn to become careful.

> At least the jocks you mock, walk the way they talk.

Okay, so it just so happened that you grew up in the 1980's, and the music and scene then was far more politically, ethically and community conscious. So what?! You put yourself in the shoes of a mall kid who got into Punk circa GREEN DAY or OFFSPRING. Then the bands with the real meat'n'potatoes of Punk to them would be say, NOFX or RANCID. So how can you seriously expect a large proportion of people from that age group to care about politics or ethics? Now I'm sure there's a whole load who are and will be, don't get me wrong, but what I'm saying is; the spirit of the age doesn't really dictate participitation, communication, political consciousness, creativity or an enquiring mind. And that's not the fault of the kids or those bands (whose politics and ethics are merely implicit rather than explicit), but that of capitalism and consumerism. It's all about 'when' you grew up, it's all about the 90's being where void retro consumer culture really took hold, where youth, for the first decade in four, had no real specific culture of their own invention to call their own - it was all sold back to them, reheated and luke warm.

I'm under no illusions; we (the band I'm in) were handed a poison chalice. We took up an opportunity with people I once respected, and that respect was spat back in my face. As it happened, mainstream business (as it was made to appear) ended that relationship. But knowing what I know now, we were harmed more by the deceit of the people we respected and thought we could trust than any corporate machine. This experience has taught me not only about my own naivety, but also why so many of those older bands went on to sellout to major labels. After all, if they've already been royally screwed by those they trusted in the 'independent family', then both sides of the coin appear to be the same, so what do they have to lose by risking a sellout apart from losing a few loyal fans? I don't agree with it, but you can see why it goes on. And believe me, the lying and deceit goes on far more than those 'independent' labels let on, it's just the bands don't speak out.

> Why can't you see the big picture? Why, why can't you see? Your view of life is like looking backwards through a telescope... I don't understand how you can be so fucking radical and yet be so narrow minded. You hate everybody just like everybody hates you. I can see why you can't see the fucking big picture.

Let's face facts here; THE big revolution in Punk was creating an alternative production and network system for the distribution of music. That was it. What other change has it ever affected that wasn't on a personal level? What we have today is what we had yesterday; a lot of people buying music and going to see bands play live. There's not a hell of a lot else that goes on under the umbrella that doesn't go on in the daily trappings of consumer culture or the macro-society. We all get hot under the collar about our favourite music and want to covet and protect our precious possessions, but really, what else gets done? 'Action Speaks Louder Than Words' scream a thousand records, covers and zines, but how many people step outside the bubble and contribute to any real change? Punk seems to think that starting up a record label is going to change the fucking world. Don't you think Punk Rock has a somewhat over inflated sense of self-importance sometimes? Don't we sometimes catch ourselves talking and realise we just sound like bickering siblings?

> Are you ready for the revolution? Cuz when it comes what are you gonna do? Are you just gonna sing about it?

So, if you would ask me what has changed I would say that one of the most fundamental, but subtle weakenings of the foundations of the whole shebang, is the fact that over the last four or five years, most of the bands, the labels, the promoters and other participants, have ceased to be friends, comrades or co-operatives in a community and started subconsciously viewing each other as the competition in a marketplace. It's unspoken, but it's there. Punk didn't suddenly sell out, it always was, but Punk grew up. It's not so much about youthful fun and doing it for the hell of it, even for the kids. Punk is a serious business now, and stylistically it's just cyclically taking care of business. So where next Columbus? The best any of us can do is lead by example. Try to reach out and communicate ideas. The rest is up to those meddling kids.

WELLY / ARTCORE ZINE ■ ■ ■

the same. Shifty club owners and sleazy promoters, don't care what it means, as long as it means cash. And you don't give a give a fuck about the 'scene'. When it's just another scheme, to make someone easy money. It's still Rock & Roll, same old shit, "5,000 bucks? No problem!" "I'm sorry but you're just gonna have to talk to our agent." "Babe, a gig in this town babe? Hey, buy. That's not what it means to me, all I care about's being free! And you can pull the wool over your own eyes, but you're sorry when they come, and take you in your sleep. *TH'INBRED - 'Hardcore, Inc.' (1986)*

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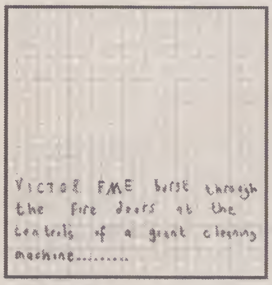
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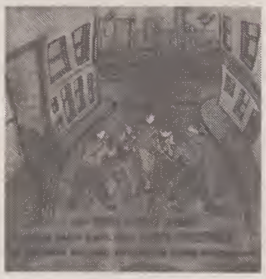

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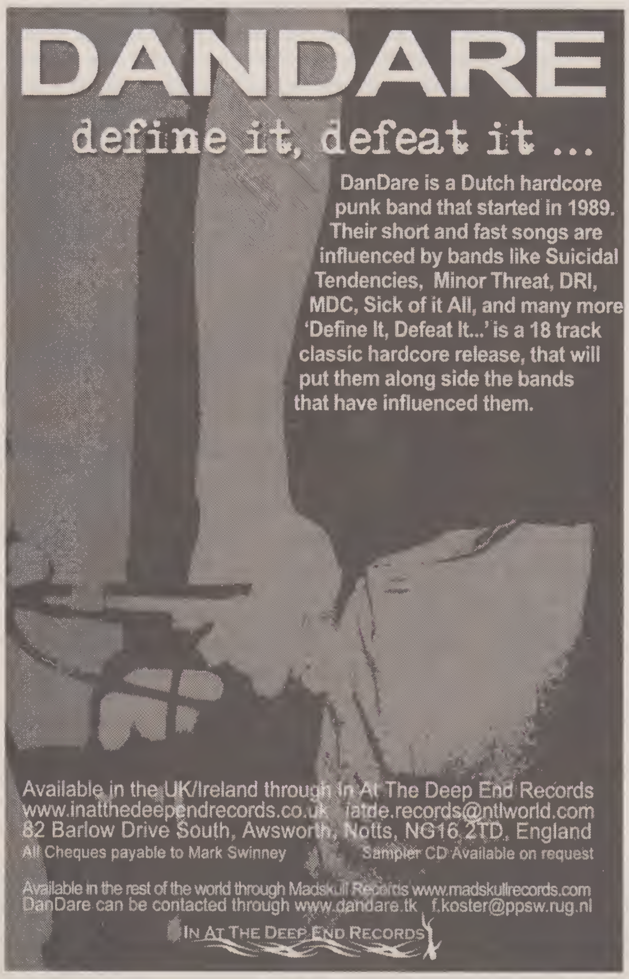

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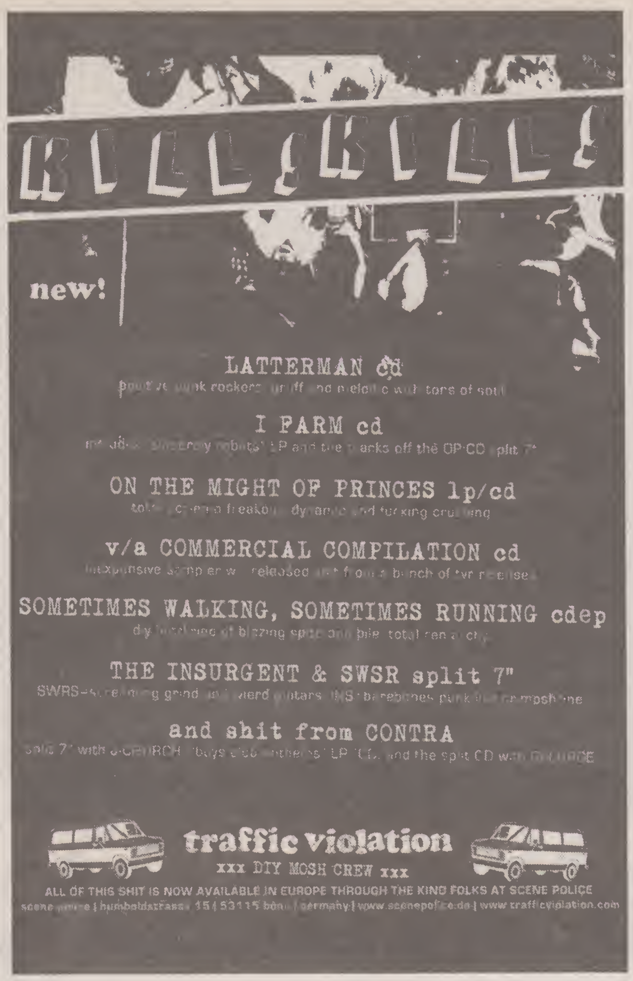

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ACADEMY MORTICIANS

Dan McKee, the punkest kid in Coventry!

AS FOR SPUNGE AND 100 REASONS, WHATEVER. PEOPLE MINDLESSLY BUY WHAT THEY GET MARKETED AND WE HAVE TO HELP SNAP THEM OUT OF THAT PAVLOVIAN RESPONSE BY FORCE-FEEDING THEM SOMETHING INTERESTING. I HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH SUCCESS AS LONG AS IT IS EARNED AND WORTHY SUCCESS, BUT THIS MANUFACTURED SUCCESS, THIS SUCCESS BY NUMBERS CRAP THAT WE HAVE STARTED SEEING SINCE MTV2 AND KERRANG CO-OPTED "ALTERNATIVE" MUSIC IS NOTHING BUT A CHEAP MARKETING PLOY, SO PEOPLE BUY SHIT MUSIC BECAUSE "THOSE GUYS ARE GOOFY" OR "THOSE GUYS ARE COOL"...

The ACADEMY MORTICIANS are a rare breed of British punk band. They're political, intelligent and highly socially aware, so you'd be forgiven for thinking that they'd sound like some kind of generic "DIS" band. You'd also be wrong though, as devilish, devious, quirky, poppy punk is much more the order of the day when it comes to their musical output. As I said, they're a rare breed for sure, but they're also a band this country would not be the same without. Interview with bass activist Dan McKee by Monk Dave.

Fracture - *Okay, give us a structurally interesting version of the bands history including any other bands your members currently happen to be in. I know you've had a rather turbulent history, what's up with that?*

DaN - Hmmm, how long you got? Okay… the hella short version is that we started life in 1995 by usurping a shitty school covers band that Simon used to play drums for and turning it into an original punk-rock monster that has, throughout the years, had more lineup changes than SPINAL TAP have had drummers, whilst always generating around the permanent creative nexus of guitarist Simon Mastrantone (he forsook drums for guitar) and myself on bass, and this band still exists here today, seven long years later, now with Tom Wise on second guitar and Steve White on drums to complete this, our best line-up ever.

A longer and more interesting version would point out that in early 2001 creative and personal differences that had been brewing and building between Simon and me for the many years of our intensely fucked up friendship finally came to an ugly head that lead to the very acrimonious breaking up of ACADEMY MORTICIANS that April.

Basically, Tom, Steve and I started a band without Simon called BULLET OF DIPLOMACY that was more weird, experimental, darker and powerful punk rock than AM had been. And of course, Simon started up his own new band too, CLUSTERBOMB FAERIES, also with Steve the drummer because (a) Steve is very diplomatic, and (b) I guess Steve is the only drummer we know! This band was much more mellower and sort of indie-ish in a peculiar way than ACADEMY MORTICIANS had been, while still really powerful.

Anyway, we were doing these new projects, but as time went on and Simon and I grew older and wiser we realized that we were a bunch of prize assholes and spookily, exactly a year after AM had been disbanded, in April of 2002, Si and me got to talking and sorted our shit out with some of that crazy-ass old fashioned "communication" we'd heard so much about. With

Clockwise from top left (below) :

The legendary "illegal" Bohatch artwork / Dan on the blower to his solicitor / Dexter Holland (pretty fuckin' fly for a sued guy) / The Academy Morticians, playing up to the camera like they just won BBC TV's "The Next Big Thing"...

the personal stuff sorted between me and him, we realized that we really had nothing stopping the band reforming. ACADEMY MORTICIANS only broke up because Si and I simply couldn't coexist on the same team anymore. It sucked and was a real shame because we all loved the band so much, and so with all that petty personal bullshit out of the way, we figured awesome, let's do it. Actually we said, let's see what a practice feels like, and as the practice felt right we then figured awesome, let's do it.

However, as BULLET OF DIPLOMACY and CLUSTERBOMB FAERIES were all also great and much loved bands in their own rights we are also still doing those bands. So basically now, Tom, Steve and me do BULLET OF DIPLOMACY while Si, Steve and these other guys do THE OBSERVATIONS and then the four of us come together to do ACADEMY MORTICIANS. It's kind of like how NO MEANS NO are also in various forms, THE HANSON BROTHERS and THE SHOWBUSINESS GIANTS... same people, different bands, and all the bands sound different and distinct.

So, as far as ACADEMY MORTICIANS is concerned, we've been around seven years now, and still play oddball poppy political punk rock that's confused everyone and been compared to artists as diverse as DEAD KENNEDYS to TORI AMOS, QUEEN to SKIMMER, BAD RELIGION to BLUR. No one seems able to properly define us and we're very cool with that! Bet you wish you never asked that question now, eh?

Fracture - *So you have a new album on the way, which was actually supposed to be out ages ago. I heard a rumour you got into some strife with the label that was going to be putting it out (or something) - what happened there?*

DaN - Yeah, this album, "What Happened", is definitely cursed, no doubt about it. Probably because we started recording it on Friday the 13th of October 2000 for the superstitious among you? Anyway, it was originally supposed to be for Crackle! Records but the costs we were paying for the recording were getting silly and we suddenly found ourselves needing some extra cash for completion that they understandably couldn't afford as they had just agreed to paying for production not recording, so we were left with an unmixed album, no label, and the studio we were using needed over seven hundred quid to finish the job! We were pretty screwed because we couldn't just find any old label to release it, we needed one who could also pay for this damn mixing. This seeming saviour of a label who could pay the necessary costs was a new label starting up out of Caerphilly who we'd been introduced to through a friend. Now I have to be careful here with what I say... this is the label who, as you said we allegedly "got into some strife with"... and they have threatened me with legal action so many times simply for speaking my mind about them and what, in my opinion, is the way things went down between us that I feel like I'm walking on eggs every time someone asks me what happened and why our album has taken so long to come out! So I'm going to point out to be on the safe side, to everyone reading this that what follows is just my opinion and interpretation of our dealings with this label and in no way meant to influence or change your own ideas and opinions about that label. I'd also like to point out that feeling bullied out of speaking my own mind about what I consider to be the truth really does suck and that this kind of censoring litigious behaviour has, in my opinion, no place in punk rock or in fact, in any decent society. It is also my opinion and speculation that a company who could answer their critics and show exactly why they feel said critics are wrong about that which they allege, could shut up their detractors simply with the truth and would not have to resort to such ridiculous means unless they have something maybe to hide?

Anyway, this label paid for our mixing. There were delays with getting the promised money from them, but we wrote that off as the teething problems of a new label and eventually, after the set-backs, the money was all paid. So the label had a mixed album and they had artwork instructions etc... we were told the album would probably be out by the Summer.

We were told a lot of things by the label, and there were several phonecalls I wish I had recorded just so I could have a good chuckle later. I guess we were naïve for assuming that verbal agreements would be binding even though the promises weren't in our actual label contract, but having only dealt with small punk rock labels that do everything on the trust of a handshake before, we took what we were told at face value and so we believed what we were told and thus believed that we had signed to a label that would get our album out, sort us out tours of the UK, Europe and Canada, and even get us a split release with a legendary Canadian punk band who I had been a big fan of for years.

The long and short of it is; the album is finished and artwork instructions handed over in May. September rolls along with still no sight of the album's release. Not even a glimpse at the finished artwork let alone an actual product. Talk of the alleged split release has now stopped with no explanation. There is also a European tour we're supposed to be doing. You see, the label signed the album after ACADEMY MORTICIANS had broken up, but we had been up front about that situation with them from day one and they had been surprisingly cool with it. BULLET OF DIPLOMACY were set to do all the promotion for the AM release and part of that was to be this European tour in December 2001.

As I'm now at university in Cardiff, I can meet up with the label folk as Caerphilly is just down the road from me. We meet up a few times and it turns out that this tour we are supposed to be doing in just three months still hasn't even been booked! Then we find out that it can't be booked and that it's off! This is not really surprising to us as for various other reasons from our past few months experience with this label and their alleged promises none of us in B.O.D had really expected this tour to actually happen so none of us were too surprised when it was called off. But now it's like November and still no sign of our album... and so we're getting more and more pissed off at the label and the struggle that we are having just to get a straight answer from them about the simplest of things. I won't go into the catalogue of alleged problems that had affected our opinion of their reliability over the months, but as we got more and more fed up by, what we saw, as the sheer uselessness of a record label who couldn't seem to be able to perform the simple task of releasing an album that had been ready since May, I began talking to others on the label and hearing other alleged problems with them, including variations on the reason the European tour was cancelled that placed the blame on us, B.O.D, supposedly pulling out, a story the label had been allegedly spreading to position the blame ludicrously and falsely on us instead of the fact that this tour was never even booked!

The end for us came when, in despair at the lack of action in regards to our album's release, after release date after release date after release date had passed by, I got in touch with the artist who had done the picture that was to be our front cover, a picture that the label were already using in advertising for the album's supposed release and a picture that we had been told was bought and paid for ages ago, to see what was going on. The artist, Mike Bohatch, told me the picture wasn't ours and that the label hadn't paid for it after they initially got in touch with him about it. He hadn't given us permission to use it, or even given the label a usable copy and he was pissed off that it had been used in adverts without permission.

We'd been (in our opinion) mislead one too many times by this label about what was going on with the album and when we tried finding out what was going on we got more of the same and so, basically coming to loggerheads, they let us out of our contract after we paid back our advance of £200 and in January 2002 we finally got off that label. So while the album no longer had a home, we all felt a hell of a lot happier with the situation now we no longer had to deal with what we perceived as unprofessional and unwholesome difficulties in the simple task of a record label releasing a CD.

Again, that's just the way we saw it, and this record label deny the things we accuse them of, but thus far any questioning and research that we've tried doing to see what the real story with that label is has been met with either variations of "no comment" from the label, legal threats, or other such obstacles in the search for indubitable truth and so I guess we'll never know what the score is with those guys. The bottom line is, while pissed, we wasted so much time with them, we're glad to be off the label, and yes, we did have many problems with them and after the research we tried doing to get some answers showed us what it showed, we are not only glad but relieved that we didn't sign away any BULLET OF DIPLOMACY stuff either which had been in the cards for a short while.

So we had no label but we had this album ready for release, then even better, the band reformed so trying to get the album released was no longer flogging a dead horse! Eventually I decided to put it out myself with some help from cool Birmingham label Iron Man Records and so that's what we're doing. The album is now called "What Happened" and is hopefully out this September. Two years in the making and three record labels later, an album that saw the band itself break up and reform again, and hopefully it will finally see the light of day after all the hassle it's been through in trying to be released. It's the best AM release yet and has something for everyone on it as long as everyone likes political poppy punk rock weirdness. It even has Mitch from NAPALM DEATH screaming on it just for the shits and giggles because he helped produce it.

Fracture - *How has the actions of said label affected the bands approach to dealing with "punk" labels? Do you feel let down by the actions of said label?*

DaN - We definitely felt let down by the label who we feel dicked us around. I mean, we wasted months of our musical lives waiting for an album to come out that never did and felt mislead about what was going on with our own hard work and art, and have since heard stories that they have allegedly done the same sort of thing to others on the label. When we are constantly warned within the scene against being fucked over by the majors, it is really saddening and disheartening to see indies seemingly fucking people over too.

After dealing with these guys however, I don't consider them a "punk" label at all, just a lame impostor in the scene, and good dealings with Crackle! In the past and Iron Man nowadays keeps the faith alive in good punk rock labels. You can't let one or two bad apples spoil the whole damn bunch! It has made me hella wary of contracts though, and I think it'll be a long while before I trust a promise made by a record label to me again. I want documented proof of everything now or else it's all just so much hot air. I also make damn sure at keeping records of all e-mail communication with people. Sad I had to learn that lesson the hard way but hey! You live, you learn, it's what makes life so interesting. That and the insane of course who never fail to make things interesting.

Fracture - *Although it's not really common knowledge, one of your members got Dexter Holland of Nitro Records / THE OFFSPRING sued - this is awesome, how did this come about?*

DaN - Okay, I give, you got me bang to rights guv'nor and I'm coming out with my hands up! That was me. I got Dexter Holland sued, or so I hear, and as I really don't agree with the legal system I'd like to point out that it was a complete and total accident that I kind of Mr. Magooed into.

You see, there was this great segment of Saturday Night Live called "Deep Thoughts". They were these hilarious and surreal pithy thoughts by a guy called Jack Handy who was a close friend of one of my mom's best friends. I was in New York a few years back and this friend of my mother's was staying with us. It just so happened that the day she was going to dinner with this Jack Handy guy was the same day as I bought the new Nitro Records sampler, "Deep Thoughts". The album used artwork and jokes that I think were either totally ripped off from Jack Handy or at least done in the style of his stuff? The thing was, I just assumed that Jack had done it for them... you know, they'd paid some kind of fee and commissioned some new "Deep Thoughts" for the album, so I told my mom's friend to tell Jack that evening that it was cool that he was working with punk labels now. I was just stoked that this guy was so cool, Saturday Night Live and punk rock... being both a fan of comedy and of punk this guy seemed like an awesome dude and I just wanted to show my support. The next day I ask the friend if she had told Jack and she said that she did but that he didn't know anything about any Nitro CD and that he had called his lawyers about it! A few months later I'm back in Birmingham and I see a new Nitro sampler with the exact same songs on it as "Deep Thoughts" but with a different cover and inlay and with a new title : "The Thought Remains The Same". Oops! My mate Paul Raggity writes for Rock Sound and he had to interview Dexter recently and it turns out that he was sued or something by Handy cuz he had used the "Deep Thoughts" stuff without permission and that Jack had been tipped off about the record by some friend of the family! I suppose that friend would be me and also that I guess ACADEMY MORTICIANS will now never be signed to Nitro?

Fracture - *The other thing this member is famous for is appearing on "The Weakest Link" on TV - what was that like, I heard they cut a lot of your stuff out? Also, did you not feel that by appearing as a "generic geeky student" you were whoring yourself to the mainstream entertainment industry, and really letting yourself down as a politcial, principal based band / person?*

DaN - Shit, I didn't know I was "famous" for being on The Weakest Link, but I was on it, yeah. Famous maybe for being the most undeserving person to ever make it to the third round on the show? I just did it as a laugh and because I missed my girlfriend after she went to university. It was my year out, my girlfriend and I had spent the summer watching the show together and when she went off to university and I found myself with a lot of time on my hands I figured... hmmm, I'm feeling pretty crazy right now, why not just e-mail that show we loved and see if I can be on it just for the kicks? It was so easy, just a click on the mouse and a filled in form. It was just a random kind of outrageous thing I thought would be funny. Next thing I know they have an audition in Swansea the same weekend that I'm in Cardiff anyway so I go along and bada boom bada bing, I get a call and on the 19th November I trundle off to London courtesy of the BBC to stay at some hotel so I can film the show early next morning! It was totally a case of a joke gone too far and as I found myself alone in that hotel room the night before shooting I was totally tripping on the experience.

It was fun though, just totally surreal being on that stage with those lights, that music, and that scary-ass woman Anne Robinson. My mind was just spinning with the whole thing. I personally found Anne to be exactly like her on-screen persona off screen too, because I kind of rubbed her up the wrong way when we made our introductions...the BBC folk said I couldn't say I was in a band as an occupation as for demographic reasons I had to be a "gap year student", and when Anne asked me what I did before the filming started I told her I was in a band but that officially I was a "student" nudge, nudge, wink, wink. You could see in her eyes she had no time for my lip. You could also see that the producers didn't either because when the episode was shown on TV all my good comebacks to Anne during our mid-round bantering were left on the cutting room floor.

Fair enough I guess as they need to put over her character as an uber bitch and that doesn't work when she gets as good as she gives from cocky kids like me. In terms of whoring myself for mainstream entertainment, I don't think I did that at all as I didn't do it to be on TV or anything... it was just for a laugh really between me and my girlfriend at the time, and to see how far I could take the joke. I didn't want the prize money and never once entertained the idea of winning it. I just wanted to fuck around on the show and I did... I was told by some of the other contestants that they'd kept me in even though I was flagrantly awful at the questions just because I was funny and entertaining them, and my comments were loaded with private jokes and in-gags for my mates at home. And as it was BBC, not commercial TV, I didn't even have to worry about a show with me in it being used to sell bullshit through commercials in between rounds. No, I think it was just innocent fun and, being as I don't drink, the only way I could make a real ass out of myself in public! To make up for it though, the second I got back from the taping we drove straight to Sheffield and played a gig!

Fracture - *Where does ACADEMY MORTICIANS fit into the current UK punk scene, both musically and as an opinionated fighting force? As you watch bands like SPUNGE and 100 REASONS climb the ladder of success, how does that make you* *feel? Do you think that the underground will become stronger, the more punk is distorted by these money hungry rock bands?*

DaN - I really don't know where ACADEMY MORTICIANS fit into the current UK punk scene. We've always had a problem of being too poppy for the people who want politics in their music and too political for those who want simple poppy songs. It's like there's some weird law that you can't sing about politics unless you are a hardcore band or something and we have a real problem with people opening up their minds to us. Same with reviewers, everyone talks about punk being about originality and being yourself, but we get reviewers constantly complaining because they don't know what genre of music we play and can't pigeonhole us. They say "I've never really heard anything like this before" as if it's a bad thing, and in the same breath they complain that too many bands today sound the same or something. It's totally stupid really, all these dumb conventions, the separation of political music and non-political music, a reviewer's need to label and compare, just stupid bickering weaknesses that hold the scene back and blinds us from the fact that there's room for everything if we just stop restricting ourselves.

At the end of the day, we're still going to write the stuff we do no matter who likes it though. We won't pander for the fashion conscious or the small minded who can't deal with the fact that we just write what we like. Those that get it, get it. Those that don't, don't. What can you do?

As far as our position as "opinionated fighting force", our opinions are our music… all of the bands out of the triage of ACADEMY MORTICIANS, BULLET OF DIPLOMACY and CLUSTERBOMB FAERIES pretty much have the same mission statement, which is to write kick-ass songs about how we feel and think about this world. It's just how we are as people, we're opinionated, thoughtful people; both Simon and I, the lyricists, are doing philosophy degrees right now and totally live for debate and ideas. So as an opinionated fighting force, we're just going to keep throwing shit at the wall and see what sticks as it's only through open discourse that we can find truth.

Simon and I both write too, all kinds of things from fiction to philosophy, fanzine columns to dissertations. Opinions and ideas are pretty much what the band has always centred upon and I figure as long as we keep on doing it to music that people enjoy then it's ok. We'll just fit in wherever we're welcomed and wherever people want to play with us. You're always guaranteed that we won't be something you've seen before, which is nice?

As for SPUNGE and 100 REASONS… whatever. People mindlessly buy what they get marketed and we have to help snap them out of that Pavlovian response by force-feeding them something interesting. I have no problem with success as long as it is earned and worthy success, but this manufactured success, this success by numbers crap that we have started seeing since MTV2 and Kerrang co-opted "alternative" music is nothing but a cheap marketing ploy, so people buy shit music because, "those guys are goofy" or "those guys are cool". It's all crappy aspartame art that goes down easy and seems pretty nice but slowly it is killing us all with its lack of substance and nutrition and if we're not careful we'll choke on its sickly sweetness. As for how this affects punk rock, well, I've written a whole piece about that in this very issue of Fracture so people can read that as it's a complex issue. The short and basic version is - money hunger sucks and art for money is not art… but people wanting to live off their art is a subtle yet crucial difference!

Fracture - *What's the future for ACADEMY MORTICIANS? Will things continue to work out for you, or is the Dan vs Simon nature of the band too mighty a force to be reckoned with? Will it all end in tears, so to speak?*

DaN - The future for ACADEMY MORTICIANS should be good unless we all get sent to prison to keep the numbers of dissenting citizens down which seems like a conceivable problem in Blunkett's Britain right now. The DaN vs Simon grudge match of the century is a feud we'd like to think has finally been put behind us. We are both changed individuals since April 2001, individuals who have done a lot of growing up. I even have a shitty beard and more mature glasses to prove it! We are determined to not let things get to the stage they were at before again and if for some reason they did, we feel we can deal with it a lot better now and if we can't then you can show me this interview and laugh and point or something?

The long awaited and much delayed "What Happened" album should, fingers crossed, be out right now-ish on Who Killed Culture and Iron Man Records, but check out our website for the full facts. We're hoping for a September release but as it's only July now... who knows what could happen by September... this album has been so troubled that I won't believe it will come out until I have seen it!

We're also supposed to be doing some ACADEMY MORTICIANS gigs around the country but that actually should have happened by the time this comes out and you'll have either seen us or missed us already, so it's redundant information, unless, as the cynic in me believes, the whole plan falls through like some kind of termite infested chair in which case you all missed us because it never happened.

The next projects on the horizon are first and foremost for me and the BULLET OF DIPLOMACY boys, recording the first BULLET OF DIPLOMACY album which'll hopefully happen this Christmas time, and of course, for all of us in ACADEMY MORTICIANS, it's writing new ACADEMY MORTICIANS material and recording some of that too. Basically, we're going to rock your roll and keep you thinking and rebelling whilst tapping your foot and going, ahh, what pretty harmonies and interesting chord sequences while the world crumbles all around us, nuclear war breaks out and we all melt in a pool of our own dumb arrogance. In other words, keep your eyes peeled for us in your town, get in touch if you want us to play any place, buy our new album, and fuck the war on terrorism because it's bogus and illogical!

>> ACADEMY MORTICIANS
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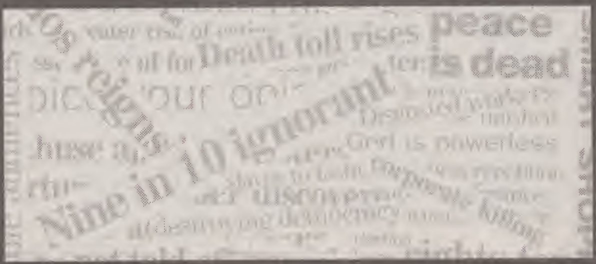

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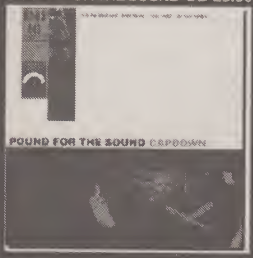

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28th Rainham Oasthouse
OCTOBER
07th Norwich Waterfront
08th Birmingham Academy 2
09th Glasgow Cathouse
10th Newcastle Uni
11th Manchester MDH
12th Leeds Cockpit
13th Sheffield Uni
15th Swansea Patti Pavillion
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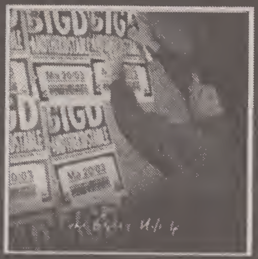

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08th Bristol Full Moon *
09th London Garage **
12th Glasgow Cathouse *
14th Leicester Charlotte *
15th Sheffield Corporation *
16th Derby Victoria Inn *
17th Brighton Concorde 2 *
18th Southampton Joiners *
19th Kingston Peel *
20th Birmingham Edwards No.8 *
21st Swindon Furnace *
22nd Tunbridge Wells Forum *
23rd NL Woerden Babylon
24th B Temse Bar Den Artiste
25th G Hannover Chez Heinz **
27th G Gottingen Juzi **
28th Frankfurt/Oder **
29th G Erfurt Engelsburg **
30th G Wermelskirchen AZ Bahndamn **
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06th CH Solothurn Kofmehl **
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04th High Wycombe White Horse
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04th NL Tilburg 0-13 *
06th Sheffield Corporation *
16th Darlington Tap & Spile
19th Harlow Square
23rd Blackburn King George Hall
24th Nottingham Rock City
25th Manchester Hop & Grape
26th Bradford Rio
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15th Leicester Charlotte
16th Darlington Tap&Spile
18th Sheffield Corporation
19th Harlow Square
22nd Newcastle University
23rd Blackburn KGH Windsor Suite
24th Nottingham Rock City
25th Manchester Hop&Grape
26th Bradford Rio
27th Peterborough Park
28th Cleethorpes Winter Gdn
29th Scunthorpe
30th Wolverhampton
31st Salisbury Arts Ctr.
NOVEMBER
01st Rugeley Rose
02nd Whitehaven Civic
03rd Glasgow King Tuts
04th Aberdeen Lava
06th Stoke Sugarmill
09th London Garage
25th G Hannover
27th G Gottingen Juzi
28th G Frankfurt/Oder
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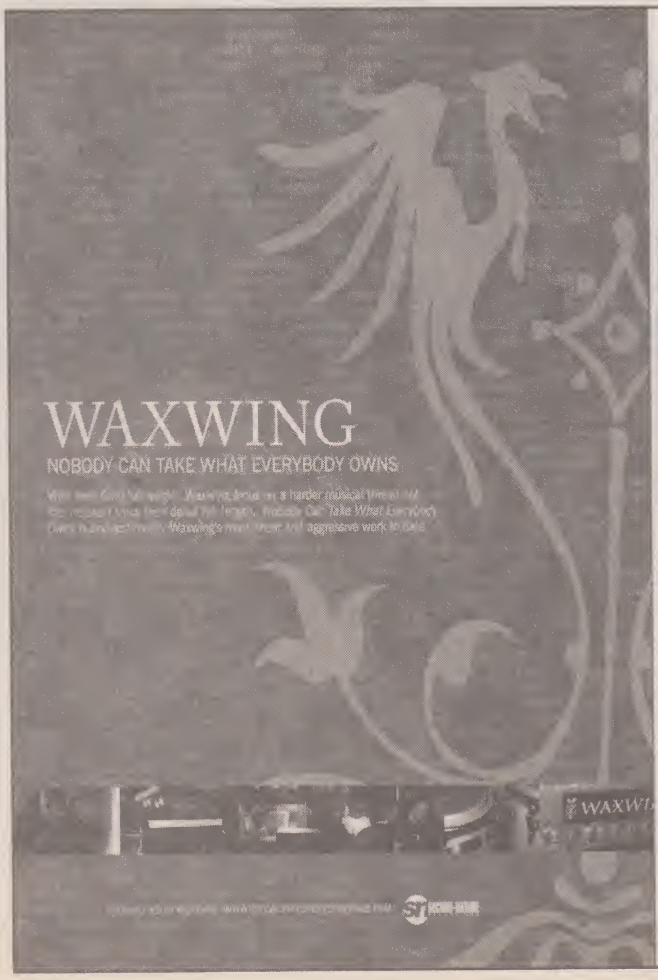
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THE PAV

Scott Reynolds first came to light as the singer for ALL, replacing Dave Smalley back in 1989. He now has a new band called THE PAVERS and they are heading over to Europe in October 2002. (Their London show is headlining the Boss Tuneage all-dayer.) They have a new album coming out so it seemed the perfect time to drop Scott a line and get the low-down on all things PAVERS related. Also, after reading Scott's rants on the PAVERS website (www.thepavers.com) about his frustration and anger concerning the way the underground music scene has become such a fucked up business of late, he seemed like an ideal person to discuss some of this issues themes with. This was kinda rushed, Scott was real busy and I hate doing email interviews, but I think it came out well. Read on and enjoy. Interview by David Stuart, all photographs by Ken Blaze (www.jiffipoprecords.com)

Fracture - *So you came to public light as the second singer for ALL, replacing Dave Smalley - what were you up to before then?*
Scott - Just playing music, going to school, and striking out with many women.
Fracture - *You were an integral part of the ALL touring and recording machine, singing on what many people regard as the finest ALL album - "Allroy's Revenge" - when the band were at their peak you left, to be replaced by Chad Price. What were the reasons for leaving such a highly regarded and hard working band? Are you still friends with those guys?*
Scott - I left for a lot of reasons, most of which have become kind of cloudy over the years. The one I hear the most is that I didn't want to tour as much anymore. I guess that was partially true, but there were a lot of other things going on at the time. Karl and I were at each other a lot back then, because he thought I wasn't pulling my weight; which was sorta true. Also, I fell in love with my wife, and that mixed a lot of things up. But mostly I think it was that the music was heading in a direction that I no longer felt a part of. I felt like they had a concept for the band that I couldn't contribute to (kids...never end a sentence with a preposition. It's confusing, and makes you sound stupid.) I think my feeling that we were headed in different directions caused a lot of unnecessary struggling within the band, so when I left it was pretty clear to everyone that it was time. Except maybe Stephen, he seemed pretty surprised by it. I still feel kind of bad about that. Yes, we still get along fine. For a while, after I left, things were strained between us. Nobody really knew who's fault it was. Then I think we all just realized it wasn't something that could have been avoided and everything was cool again. Plus Chad's great. I think that helps a lot. There are songs he sings with them that would sound like shit if I were singing.
Fracture - *You then sang for the band GOODBYE HARRY, who released two excellent albums. Were you disappointed that they failed to achieve more as a band? How did that come to an end?*
Scott - No, not really. Goodbye Harry was more of a project than an actual band. We were working with no money, and had to struggle for everything. So the turnover in band members was ridiculous. We made one record with one line up, went on tour with another line up, then made another record with a different drummer than we had on the tour. It's a wonder that we accomplished anything. It came to an end when we were supposed to move across the country. We had been living in Seattle which is kind of isolated from the rest of the country. Because of the distances involved, touring was an expensive, and difficult proposition. The plan was to move to a more centrally located part of the country. I went ahead of the rest of the band so I could set up shop. I think, in my absence, the rest of the guys got to thinking about transplanting their lives for a band that drew about twenty people a show and decided it wasn't a great idea. So they called me up and told me they weren't coming (smart boys.) Thus the GOODBYE HARRY era came to an abrupt close.
Fracture - *Next thing we know you're in a new band called THE PAVERS - based in another State - how did that band come to be?*
Scott - I had been trying to get a new band together for a very long time and wasn't having any luck. I was getting pretty discouraged when I started getting mysterious phone calls. I always leave the answering machine on to screen my calls (because I'm always behind on my bills) and I kept getting calls that were just hang-ups. It was really starting to piss me off. So one day my wife (Melissa) checks the number and calls it back. *"Who are you? Why do you keep calling here?"* says she. *"Uh, I'm Tim and I play in a band with my friends. We don't have a singer." "Wanna talk to Scott?"* she queries. *"Uh yeah."* Tim replies. Then blah, blah, blah, and the rest is history. Well almost, the drummer they were playing with wasn't the right man for the job so we asked this guy Josh. I don't remember where he came from.
Fracture - *What's the biggest difference you have found between playing in a well known band like ALL and then having to start from scratch with the PAVERS?*
Scott - It's not all that different. We still write songs, go to practice, make a record, then go on tour. I guess the biggest difference is that ALL was self sufficient. We made enough money to live exclu-

When bands and labels achieve a certain degree of s the bottom line becomes their primary motivator. It avoided. No one wants to fall off the gravy train, so la far less likely to take a chance on a band they find m interesting if they can't see a commercial niche to e

VERS

sively off of the band. Now we have to remain employed while trying to tour enough to sell our records. It's a lot tougher now. But I'm having a blast so it's well worth it.

Fracture - *Has the "Ex-ALL" tag helped at all?*

Scott - Yeah, I think it's really helped a lot. If I hadn't been in ALL I don't think anyone would have come to our shows for the first few tours. And I know we wouldn't have sold any records. People are pretty loyal, and that's really cool.

Fracture - *Now you have a new record recorded, when is that out and what can we expect? You have the "Beautiful" CDEP on Boss Tuneage - what other releases have you had out to date?*

Scott - It will be out September 30. It's fucking great. I've never been as satisfied with a record in my life. I think everyone should be ready to have their ass kicked. We have an LP out on O&O (ALL's label) called "Local 1500". That was our first effort, and we have another EP out on CI records called "Wrecking Ball".

Scott, circa now.

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e to exploit...

Fracture - *It's a pretty well known fact that you have strong views on the current state and mechanisms of the "punk rock game". At present in the UK it seems the bands pushed towards "stardom" have to be on the right label. Those bigger labels with huge distribution and promotional powers seem to rule the roost and it seems now that so many labels are focusing on bands with the potential to be big rather than releasing and supporting bands through personal taste. I guess it's the same story in the USA?*

Scott - What has happened here is that "punk rock" has become extremely lucrative. I assume that is the case there as well. Which is great for the people who are making money. Its even great for the casual music listener. I would rather they listen to NOFX or Lagwagon than Kid Rock. The problem is that successful people tend to be conservative people. When bands and labels achieve a certain degree of success, the bottom line becomes their primary motivator. It can't be avoided. No one wants to fall off the gravy train, so they are far less likely to take a chance on a band they find musically interesting if they can't see a commercial niche to exploit. At the same time expectations for the entire scene (on a purely financial level) rise until very few people are in it simply to promote exceptional music. That's what has happened here. Small promoters are becoming more & more scarce. As are good independent record stores, and live music venues. Underground music is almost non-existent. It's too bad because not only is the music becoming less and less interesting, but a lot of the fun that comes from any musical rebellion is going away. Like, no more sneaking out to see a show in someone's garage somewhere...

Fracture - *What kind of obstacles have you hit due to this unwritten directive adopted by so many "punk" record labels?*

Scott - That's a tough question to answer because it involves a lot of assumptions. For instance, if I say it makes it harder to find a label that is willing to take a chance on us, I'm assuming that ten years ago we would have been easily picked up a label. Which might not be the case at all. Maybe none of these labels think the PAVERS are any good. For me to call the new "directive" an obstacle to being signed ignores a lot of other possibilities, and makes me look more arrogant than I want to look in print (I have an image to protect, you know.) I will say that it has become much more difficult to tour efficiently. The current musical environment has severely limited the types of tours a band can do. You can get on

PAVERS as hell!

PAVERS as fuck!

the Warped tour and play a twenty minute set over by the bathrooms at noon. That's if you can even get on the Warped tour, which is extremely difficult if you're not on one of the "super indie" labels. Or you can do a tour with too many days off, and too many shows that no one knows about.

Fracture - *Do you think this current situation will force more bands to resort back to the punk rock ethos and go underground, start from scratch and build a new network? Is this idealistic?*

Scott - I think that it is inevitable that not just bands, but music fans as well, will rebuild their underground. Music is too precious to people for them to remain unsatisfied for very long. Every interesting musical movement has come out of distress or boredom. And I think a lot of the more discerning music listeners are realizing how bored they are right now. Artistically and politically speaking, the underground has always served as the only place where unique perspectives are embraced and rewarded. People won't allow rockstars and major corporations to control it for long. So I think right now is a very exciting time to be a music fan, which is what I consider myself first an foremost. It will be interesting to see what comes out of all this.

Fracture - *One thing I have noticed is the re-emergence of the mid-80s punk band gone big "hit album crisis". Bands achieve some success, start to do well and then they go and release a new album which is nothing like the material that got them "big" in the first place. It seems as being in the media spotlight throws pressure on bands to come up with a record/sound that isn't natural, more forced, and invariably when it sells like shit the band is left in a quandary. Do you have any sympathy for these bands?*

Scott - No. If they've had one big hit they've already done better than me. I have no patience for insincerity. If a band makes it big playing music that is close toy their hearts. Good for them. They deserve it. If they play even one measure of music with the primary motivation being "How do we please the most people?" they come from a part of the industry that doesn't interest me in the least and I don't care what happens to them. Don't get me wrong, I want people to listen to, and like the PAVERS and I can see how a band with a successful record could fall into that trap. But making the desire for commercial success (even if its repeat success) your main concern is shallow. Shallow music is boring and of course deserves to fail.

Fracture - *Now, you're coming over on a European tour, what are your expectations for this tour? Have you been over in any capacity since touring with ALL?*

Scott - I have absolutely no idea what to expect. I haven't been there in any capacity since I left ALL. I can't wait to find out.

Fracture - *The new album is recorded, I heard that Greg Ginn the old BLACK FLAG guitarist was rumoured to be contributing in some capacity, what's the deal with that?*

Scott - Greg and I have known each other for about 15 years now. He's one of those people who, though we don't correspond regularly, I'm always really glad to see when our paths cross. If I call him to ask a quick question about one of my records we can end up talking for an hour about music, or the music industry or whatever. Not only do I admire what he's accomplished, and all that he's given to music. But his perspective is unique, completely irreverent, and totally interesting to me. He's got the biggest middle finger in music. So we've remained pretty close over the years. Anyway, we (the PAVERS) were working on a song called Fierce Apple. In the middle of the song there is a breakdown that is made up of one guitar riff that repeats while drums do silly things around it. It kind of reminds me of later era Black Flag or Gone. So it seemed like a Ginn-type guitar solo was needed. You know, real dissonant, very aggressive, lotsa string bending, and elephant noises. We tried a few things then got to thinking, "Why settle for a solo that's Greg Ginn like? Why not call Greg." I knew he would do it. So I called him and he did. It turned out even better than I imagined. Kicks total ass. And it was a lot of fun.

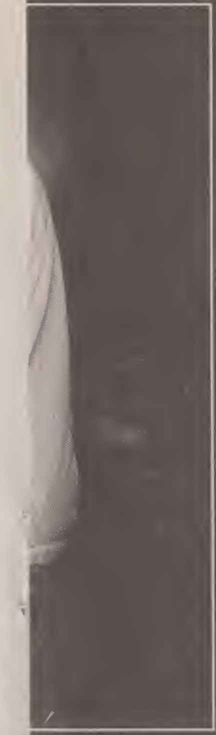
Fracture - *What have you learnt from your time spent playing this punk rock game?*

Scott - I've learned there are a lot of very interesting people in the world. The more I tour, the more I realize it. I've learned that there are a lot of very uninteresting people as well. I've learned that music keeps you young. I've learned that its hard to piss in a bottle while the van is moving. I've learned to put the toilet seat up when you first get to the venue, so people don't piss all over it. That way you'll have place to shit. I've learned that girls room is always cleaner than the boys (I think I already knew that.) I've learned that people aren't stupid, and if you treat them like they are you will appear not only arrogant but also very boring.

Fracture - *Anything to add?*

Scott - Sorry it took so long. I've been a mess trying to get the record finished, and the artwork turned in. This was a really cool interview, a lot of great questions.

**Actually, Scott returned these questions in 5 days, I'd say that was pretty quick myself! Check out The PAVERS when they play in October… failing that, check out their new album on Boss Tuneage, I have a feeling it'll be a good 'un.*



ALL? No, ALL!

SCOTT'S INTERNET RANTS!

A few people have been getting a little pissed off recently over Scott Reynolds' "outspoken" views and distrust of the current "punk" music industry that he runs on the PAVERS website www.thepavers.com... Here's what all the fuss is about!

July 19th, 2002 - The PAVERS have been actively pursuing a record label and booking agent for a long time now. What that means is that we have been contacting people and asking them if they will please give our CD's a listen and tell us what they think... can they use us? Because of my enormous influence on the industry in general (I make almost $700 in record royalties every year) I have done most of the calling. And I've learned a few things. Well, more precisely, things I already knew have been have been made even more clear to me. And I think it is time for the PAVERS to approach this "music business" thing very differently. The unprecedented popularity the independent record industry is enjoying right now has made us all such slaves to our fiscal potential that all other considerations are becoming less and less important. In other words, it has left us asking, "Who do I gotta talk to to get rich around here. Fuck art, I want my piece of the pie!" The counterculture has become pop culture. Bands are searching for labels that swing a big enough bat to get them on the giant industry tours. And in order to succeed in wooing these "independent" labels bands are adjusting their music to fit the narrow scope of the industry. The labels in turn are cautiously signing unoriginal, absolutely uninteresting bands who will not rock the incredibly successful boat they have been sailing for the past few years. You won't find a label like SST of the 80's anywhere today. SST signed the Minutemen, Sound Garden, Descendents, Black Flag, Bad Brains, Sonic Youth, The Meat Puppets, etc. all at the same time. The SST "sound" was impossible to categorize. Therein lay its greatness. In recent years however, "punk rock" bands and labels have experienced such financial success that specialization has become the order of the day. Stepping outside each label's narrow musical vision and taking a chance on an even slightly different sound is now seen as bad business. So if you want to listen to the Bouncing Dropkicking Mollyfloggers you go to label A, Bad FX-label B, music so emo even the cover art makes you cry try label C, etc. What does this mean for the PAVERS? It means that I waste money talking long distance, and postage sending CD's to people who would sooner put out a record of that wacky Green Day drummer farting than a PAVERS CD. And can you blame them? They have tasted success and want to stay on top. They know which side of the bread is buttered. Can't fault them there. The fault lies with me. Because, while I would NEVER adjust the music, I still call these people repeatedly to see if they'll have us. People who's musical taste offends me and who have actively participated in dumbing down the musical form I've dedicated my life to are now on my speed dial. I am deeply ashamed, and it is time to clean up my / our act.

Before I get to what you can do to help, I want to get more specific. It is important to me to come as clean as possible. I'll start with Fat Wreck Chords. I've spoken to Fat Mike a number of times. He is a very nice guy. He gets on the phone and talks to me no matter how busy he is. He returns my calls even though he doesn't even know me, and has absolutely no interest in the PAVERS. NOFX is a great band, and Mike's a great songwriter. "White Trash, Two Heebs and a Bean" was in my CD player for almost a year straight. But I'll be honest, I know almost nothing about the Fat label, except that they sell a lot of records. The few Fat bands I have heard I don't like at all. Add to that the fact that the one time I spent any time with Fat Mike he played a Sum 41 CD for me and told me how great they are. If you like Sum 41 that is your right as an American, but personally, if you gave me the choice between having haemorrhoids removed without anaesthetic or listening to an entire Sum 41 record I'd be bending over. So I guess I don't need to call Fat Mike anymore.

Next, Kung Fu records. The guy to talk to over there is Joe Escalante from the Vandals. Once again, a very nice guy in a legendary band. I recently saw the Vandals in Pittsburg and they kicked gigantic ass. Joe also always gets on the phone when I call, even though the PAVERS fit his label like a glove on a foot. He seems like a really cool guy. But when we played in San Pedro last time he couldn't make the show because he had to go to see Blink 182. I know they're all bros and what not, and that's cool but Blink 182 sings "All the Small Theeeeeeenns," and I saw their poster for sale in Toys Are Us when I was Christmas shopping (that is not a joke). Hey, if he skipped the PAVERS' show to watch Ween, or No Means No, or Willie Nelson or something, cool!! I'd have him get me a ticket. But Blink 182? "She left me roses by the stairs. Surprises let me know she cares." Did I just vomit or was that you? I think I'll cross Kung Fu off my list.

Then there was the time I talked to Tim Armstrong (Rancid) back stage at the Warped Tour. The fact that I was lurking around back stage at the Warped Tour is reason enough to hate me but I'll get to that later. Anyway, there we were pretending we remembered the good old days that never existed. Tim trying to pretend that he remembered me at all (in fact I'll bet he doesn't remember talking to me or anyone else that day) and me pretending I wasn't just another hopeful loser shlepping his demo around back stage at the Warped Tour. And what do I have in common with that guy anyway, besides the fact that we obviously both spend our millions at the same thrift store? I can't remember the last time I had to duck my head so I wouldn't fuck up my mohawk getting off my giant tour bus. I don't think I was EVER that punk. Cross off his label.

There are more but I'll finish up by telling you about Nitro (probably the lowest I have sunk.) They are the label that showed the most interest. Well, more precisely one guy who works there did. But he later recanted when Dexter Holland (the label's owner) said he wasn't interested. If you don' t know who Dexter Holland is, he is the lead singer from the Offspring, a band that makes Sum 41 seem like the London Philharmonic. This should be the point where those of you who are still making excuses for me give up completely. After we received word that somebody at Nitro was interested we were told to wait until Dexter, who was off composing his latest opus, got back and had time to listen to our tape. So it was my job to call them repeatedly and find out if the musical genius who wrote "Pretty Fly for a White Guy" thought our music was any good. God, just typing this makes me feel like I need a shower. I TRIED TO GET MY BAND ON A LABEL RUN BY DEXTER HOLLAND!! I don't think I'll ever come clean!!! Who's next, P. Diddy!!?? "Hello,....yeah it's me Scott. Has Puffy heard our tape yet?"

So you see the predicament in which we find ourselves, all dressed up and nowhere to go, trying to remain sincere in an artistic wasteland that used to be home to some of the music industry's truest visionaries. Its enough to drive a poor boy to fits of despair; right? Well that's not how I see it. It's always darkest before the dawn and the future is bright for the PAVERS. I'm embarrassed that I have allowed the success of others to cloud my judgement and obscure what is truly important. But my eyes have cleared.

August 8th, 2002 - Wow! I can't believe the number of responses I got over my last rant! I knew it might stir things up a little, but I had no idea. Though 99% of the responses were positive, a few were not and brought up some good points. Points I feel I should address. I'm going to call this rant Scott's Big Mouth Part Two. I'm pretty sure this will be the final instalment. So here goes...

One thing that was said in reference to my last rant was that I am bitter because I haven't achieved the degree of success I had hoped for, and am therefore pointing the finger at others who have done well; an understandable assumption, and one I've investigated myself. Am I just jealous? After no small amount of introspection I can tell you that I am not. I have never been happier playing music in my life than I am right now. I just made a kick ass record, and am about to head out and sell it. Life is grand. But whether you believe me or not is unimportant. It is beside the point. My motives are completely disconnected from the validity of my argument. My points are these: First, that indie labels are now more concerned with maintaining the very lucrative status quo than actively seeking out interesting musical ideas. They function just like the majors consistently putting out music that falls safely into the narrow parameters each label knows it can sell. How do they know they can sell it? Because they've sold it before, over and over again. Goodbye variety. Goodbye choice.

The second point in my argument is that these labels have become so successful that many good musicians are dumbing down their music so that they can join the party. I'm not talking about the Offspring, or Blink 182 or Sum 41, or any of the other bands I mentioned in the last rant. Their music was already dumb. I see a band like Blink 182, for instance, a lot like Billy Idol was in the 80's. He was a "punk rocker" in Generation X who had his eye on the big time. He looked at punk rock as his ticket into the spotlight and rode it for all it was worth. Thus he became your mom's idea of what punk rock was supposed to be, and a charicature of what it really was. That is exactly what Blink is to me. They are cute, and lovable. They have all the right tattoos and piercings. And their music is totally inoffensive. I have no problems with Blink 182. They are exactly what they want to be, adorable punk rockers for middle school girls so far removed from anything I am trying to accomplish that they may as well be NSYNC. I have no wish to be what they are. I couldn't be if I tried. I'm far too old and ugly. Even when I was young I was too old and ugly. The only reason I brought them up in the last rant is that one of the labels I was soliciting (Kung Fu) couldn't come see the PAVERS play because its president went to the Blink 182 show. Yet his label is considered a premium punk rock label. And there are very talented people who would kill to be on Kung Fu. What's wrong with this picture? Oh yeah, and I'm not saying that the PAVERS should have been a priority in his life. If he missed a chance to go bowling, or wash his clothes because he had to see Blink 182 I would be saying the same thing.

Which brings me to point three, my culpability in all this. I solicited a fuckload of indie labels for no other reason than the fact that they had a lot of industry clout. In the last rant, I confessed to you that I have spent no small amount of time and effort trying to get the very people I feel are squashing the scene to notice my band; and that I

Scott getting ALL-O-TASTIC, circa 1990.

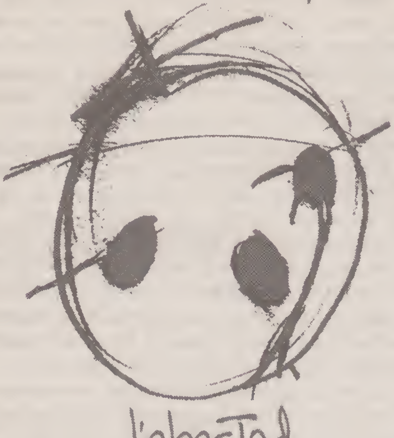
don't feel very good about it. This, once again, led to the accusation that since I didn't accomplish what I set out to do, and my band remained unnoticed by these labels, I am now attacking them. Once again, a very valid assumption; however inaccurate. Actually, we haven't gone completely unnoticed. We've had offers, but they all hinged on us "adjusting" what we play. For example, a very nice, highly successful friend of ours offered to produce our next record. He said that we have some very good songs, and some not so good songs. He wanted to hand pick the songs he thought would appeal to the most people, even resurrecting some of the more accessible Goodbye Harry songs. Then he was going to take it to people he knew at some of the A list labels. It was a very generous offer, and one we actually considered for about 45 seconds. The fact that we spent even 10 seconds considering this is what I'm apologizing for. Many of you have stuck with me for a lot of years and I actually considered watering down the music so it would appeal to people who wouldn't give us the time of day otherwise, shameful! I'll be honest though, I don't think that there is any malevolence in how these labels operate. I don't accuse any of them of purposely undermining the efforts of the lower echelon of the independent music scene. My point is simply that they are no longer a part of it, and should stop pretending that they are. They all have tour buses, and play to thousands of screaming fans every show. Yet they still fly the flag of the underdog. They still wear punk rock like their own personal badge of credibility while on corporate sponsored mega tours; and in doing so make it very difficult for bands with little more than a van and some gas money to get out there and tour or sell their records. I've said many times that punk rock has become little more than a haircut. When Rancid steps on stage to play for 20,000 people, and because they have two foot mohawks and ripped up clothes are considered punk rockers my point is made. Look at it this way; if MTV & the major labels represent the president of music land then Epitaph, Fat, Kung Fu, Nitro, and the rest represent the governor. But bands like the PAVERS need to talk to the mayor and in many towns the mayor no longer exists. Does that make sense? Well, it does to me, and it leads me to point four.

Point four - How All This Effects You, and the Music Available To You, or Why I Blame the Indie Labels for Destroying the Musical Underground (catchy title eh?) Apparently some of you failed to see why I think your music scenes are being smashed by high dollar punk rock. I think maybe I got too emotional in my last rant and didn't explain it very clearly. I want to try again because, though I don't really care who agrees with me, I wouldn't want you to base your opinion of me and my big (sexy) mouth on a misinterpretation of what I'm saying. So here goes. I'll start with Fat Mike, I'll use him because of all these "independents" he functions most like a true independent. For instance, he refuses to make videos and because of it has passed up opportunities to have Fat Wreck bands played on MTV. That is an admirable stance to take, and one that should be applauded, I guess. But I can't help but think, so what? Who gives a shit about MTV? Unless you're a rock star or a pop culture suck it has no bearing on your life. It certainly has no bearing on mine. And Fat Mike vs MTV is hardly David vs Goliath. Its more like Goliath vs King Kong. The PAVERS are like David's little brother so what do I care if Fat Mike mixes it up with MTV? I haven't watched a video in literally years. Once again I want to say that I think Fat Mike is a very talented musician. I was honestly listening to the last NOFX record last night (I love that "silicone cock" song.) I also want you to know that I'm not allergic to money. I want my kids to have nice things, and to live in a better neighbourhood. Nor do I have a problem with big shows. I would love it if a whole shit load of people came to see the PAVERS. I'm not even opposed to the mega-tour idea. It makes perfect sense to me that Bad Religion, NOFX, Pennywise, and Rancid are all on the same tour. They're all very successful bands, and almost none of them suck. My problem comes in packaging it like it's a true representation of modern (for lack of a better word) punk rock. In doing so it implies that these bands are on the bottom rung of the musical corporate ladder, and that they still embody musical rebellion. It's kind of like Eminem calling himself a rebel while having the number one record in the country. Punk rock has never been a musical form. I mean if Black Flag, and Green Day are both considered punk rock then what is punk rock? It's supposed to be an ethic, the voice of the counter culture; no matter what that voice sounds like. At this point some of you might be saying, "Wait Scott you have claimed lotsa times that you are not a punk rocker. What gives, ya lousy hypocrite?!" First of all, I don't like to call myself a punk rocker because the ethic on which p-rock is based is not exclusive to rock music. There are fiercely independent musicians involved in every form of music, but a banjo picker would never be called a punk rocker (unless he had a Mohawk, or a skateboard.) So the term punk rock seems exclusive and snobby to me. Secondly, I think the term has become is so polluted by fashion that it is almost meaningless now. I'm speaking of punk rock in this context because it is the flag these labels and musicians are flying. And why do I care that these tours are packaged the way they are, aside from the fact that it isn't true? Because if people believe that these bands represent the musical basement, they begin to believe that they can not participate in the underground music scene beyond buying a ticket to the latest giant p-rock extravaganza. If the underground requires huge venues and corporate sponsors how can the average enthusiastic punk rock fan ever hope to promote a show? It's the same for the bands. They also begin to believe that the best tour for the average punk rock band is the WARPED tour. Add to that the fact that there are about a half a dozen indie labels who can get any and all of their bands on these tours, while true independent musicians can't even get a message returned from the promoters and you start to see a lot of very interesting bands giving up. Punk rock shows at the local VFW hall start to go the way of the drive in movie. They become, in many towns, nothing but a quaint memory. And bands that could be part of a thriving music scene instead function as little more than decoration surrounding the 4 or 5 headlining bands on some all day festival. If your band draws about a hundred people to the Warped tour, why are you playing it? You are no more important to the show than the motorcycle jumpers or the skateboarders, except that their sets are longer. Imagine the same hundred people in a reasonable room listening to your entire set.

In 1984 (I think) I saw the Minutemen in Kent Ohio at a place called Mother's Junction (I think.) It was one of the three most influential musical moments of my life (the other two were my first Ramones show, and The Kinks)... D. Boone's physical size, which was considerable, was dwarfed only by the size of his enthusiasm, and Mike Watt, and George Hurley were locked in tighter than a nun's twammy. There were about a hundred of us there and I can't remember being more excited to be anywhere in my life. I got way drunk and smoked up. I even got up the nerve to talk to D. Boone, one of my greatest heroes. I had seen their tour schedule on a t-shirt and asked him how they played so many shows. He said, "Just write lotsa songs man!" I'll never forget that show. The thing is, I truly believe that if the Minutemen formed now instead of when they did that show would never happen. First of all, I can't think of a label that would sign them. Secondly, if by some miracle they did get on one of the current super indie labels, I would have to see them on some lame overhyped label tour. "The PAVERS in your basement tour" is our attempt to step backwards and play the kinds of shows that used to mean so much to us, while avoiding the self important music "biz" clingons who currently control a lot of your local music scenes. Already, we have received lots of e-mails from people who just want to have a fun show in their town. I won't pretend to believe that the PAVERS can change how everyone looks at their music scene. And I'm not saying there are no more DIY promoters out there. On the contrary, I know a lot of great places to play. I just think there should be more of them, a lot more! So e-mail us if you think you want us to come to your town. The price is $150, and It doesn't matter who you are. If you don't want us, but would like a different band to come and play, contact them, ask them how much. Everybody has a website nowadays. Make things happen, goddamn it!

I've said many times that punk rock has become little more than a haircut. When Rancid steps on stage to play for 20,000 people and, because they have two foot mohawks and ripped up clothes, are considered punk rock, my point is made...

and none of Them knew They were robots



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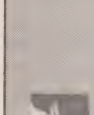

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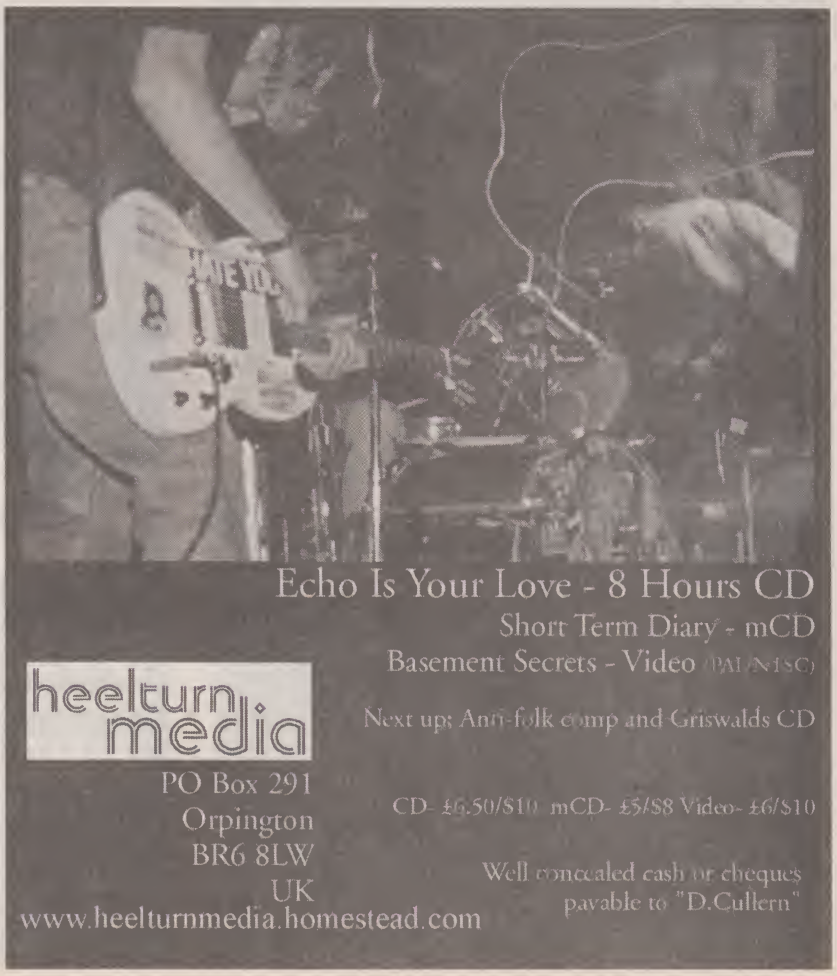

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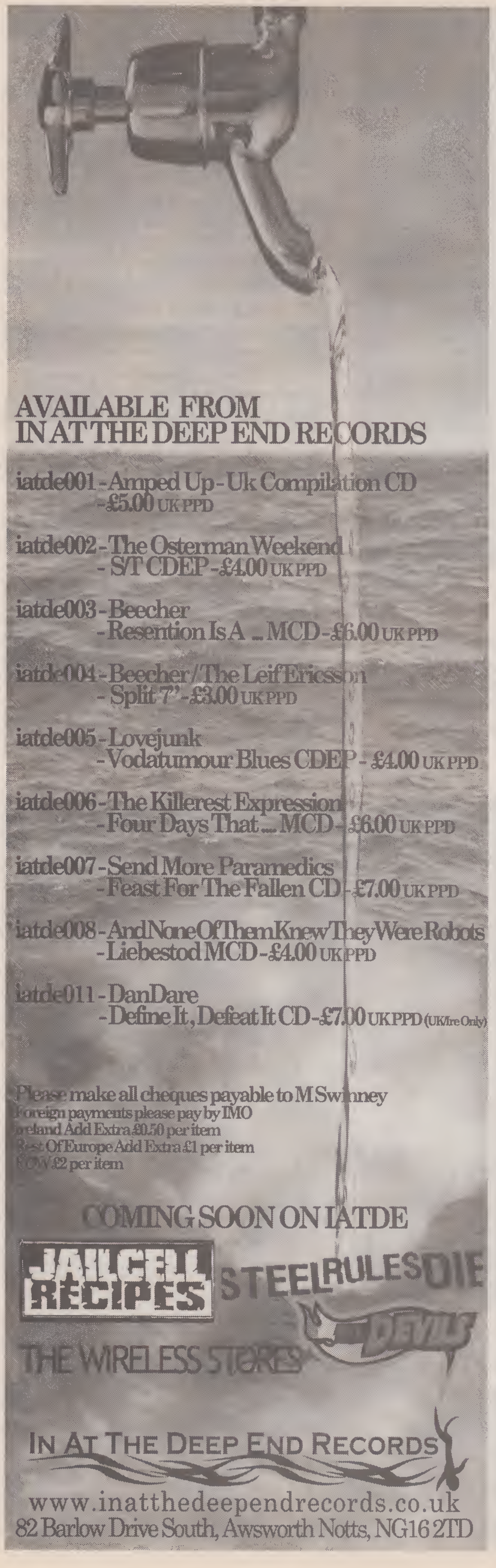

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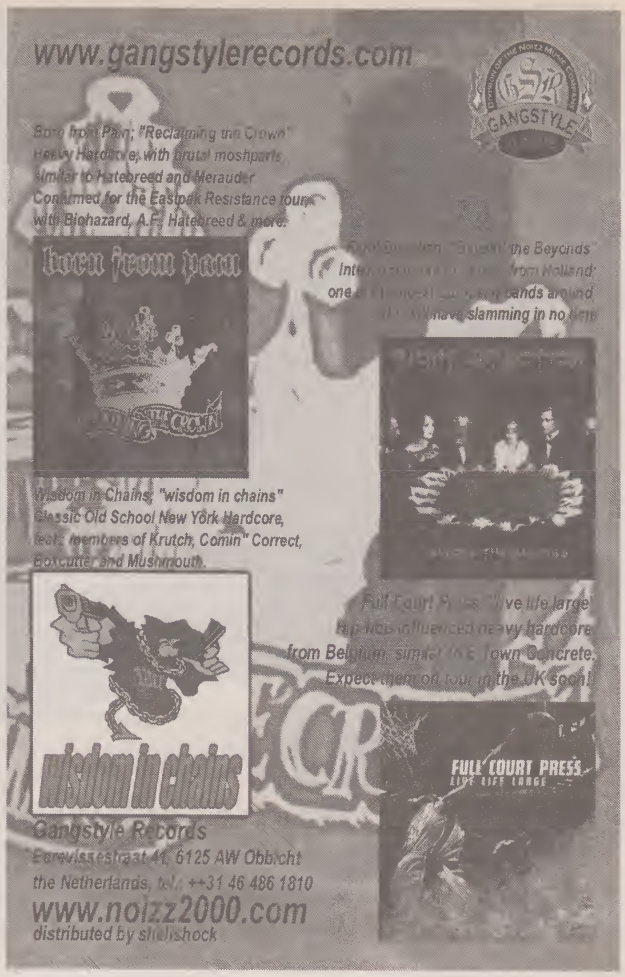

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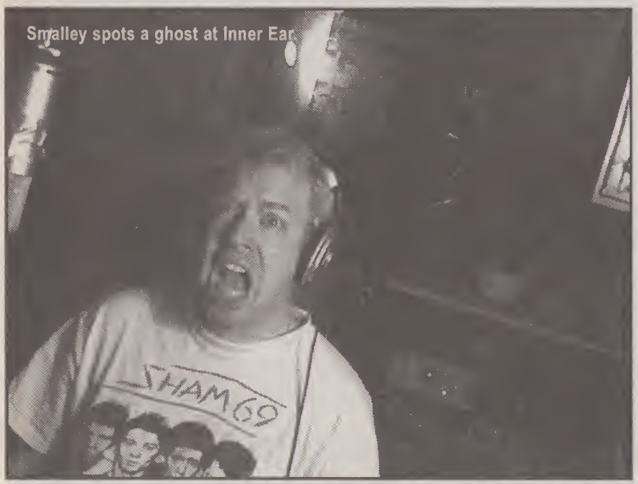
DAG NASTY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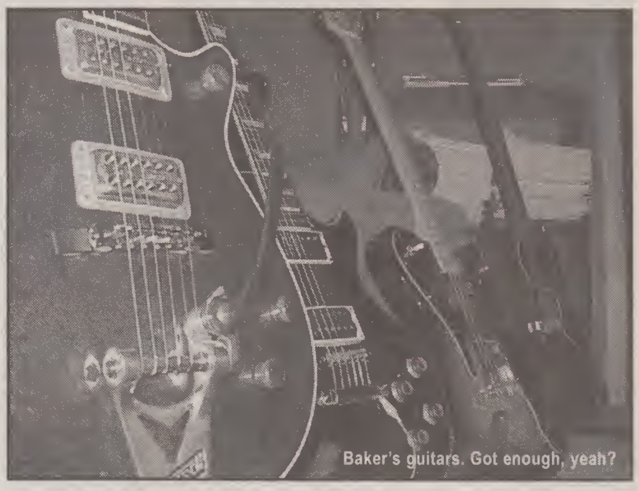
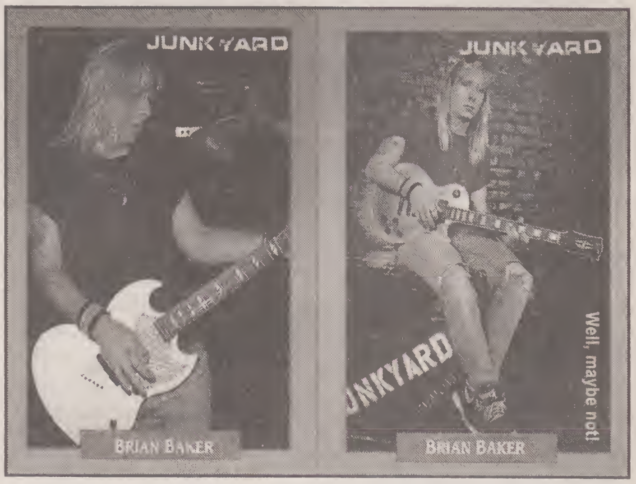

Baker's guitars. Got enough, yeah?

When I started getting into the whole punk rock thing 'back in the day' one of the first records that truly got me hooked was the Dischord CD featuring the two classic DAG NASTY albums "Can I Say" and "Wig Out At Denkos". Since then I've been lucky enough to meet all four members of the "Can I Say" line-up at various points and have followed the records they've put out with the likes of DOWN BY LAW, BAD RELIGION and THE MARSHES. A couple of years ago I received a tape from Dag drummer Colin Sears that featured two new DAG NASTY songs recorded for an anti-gun violence compilation album. Any initial fears I had about how a reunion of these 4 guys who hadn't recorded together for nearly twenty years soon evaporated, and so I was pretty interested when it was confirmed that the band had decided to go into the studio and make a new record. The result, "Minority Of One" is full of short, punchy, catchy, punk rock songs all with a distinctive DAG NASTY sound and feel. Singer Dave Smalley and Drummer Colin Sears took some time to answer a few questions about how the record came about.

Interview by Christopher Cut / Firefly / Evans / Etc.

Fracture - *How do you think the Brian, Dave, Roger and Colin of 1986 would react if they could foresee that in 2002 they'd be sitting around discussing a new DAG NASTY album? When and how was the decision made to do the record? Did it feel that there was unfinished business after the lacklustre "Four On The Floor"?*
Colin - I don't think any of us would have believed it or taken it seriously. We were all in too much of a hurry and too spastic and young. The real story is, when we recorded the songs for the Fast Music compilation (Jan 2000) the results were so good and we all had so much fun, we decided if the right offer came along that we would all be up for doing a full length album. But, we were in no rush to move forward at that time. Brian, Dave and I had spoken to several labels that were interested and nothing seemed to feel right. The rest of the process occurred quite organically - which is more in the spirit of our past anyhow. Larry from Revelation actively hunted us down via the daghouse website. I was down in LA in June 2001 and met with Larry for Thai food and I was really impressed by his energy and excitement. Larry was extremely persistent, still I wasn't convinced that we could make it happen this year (2002), if ever, but Revelation was ready to move quickly to negotiate contracts. Because DAG NASTY and Revelation trusted each other so much, we were able to move more quickly and pull it off. It felt we were working with friends (like Dischord) rather than a business partner. Things have been great so far. "Four on the Floor" had some good songs but the overall product was not so consistent as it had been with "Can I Say", probably due to the fact that it was written, recorded and mixed in about two weeks. There wasn't a need to do it (Minority of One), we just did the new album for fun. Still, some people felt that "FOTF" has not held up over the years as the other albums have, so it was nice to record something that we put a lot more time and effort into as our follow-up.
Dave - Making "Minority of One" to me was all about making a Dag record that spoke to people, and to ourselves. It was definitely a lot of fun, but there was an underlying sense of purpose and seriousness there as well. DAG NASTY is a responsibility that I think we take very seriously. But really, making it had nothing to do with "Four on the Floor". I disagree with the question's use of the word "lacklustre" for "FOTF" There are a lot of kids all over the world who love that record - some of the most passionate Dag fans put songs like 'Still Waiting', 'Million Days', 'SFS' and others among their favourites. I think "FOTF" was actually the "funnest" of all the Dag records - we made it literally on vacation and in many ways it has that feeling to me. I tour a lot with DOWN BY LAW, and believe me, FOTF is heavily requested and asked about. More than any of the others among some fans, particularly in Europe. "Minority of One" was and always will be its own album, one that we made because we wanted to record together again, and make punk rock that we love and believe in. That's the deal.
Fracture - *Has initial reaction to the record been very positive? Why do you think DAG NASTY's music has continued to play a part in people's lives? Did the excellent www.daghouse.com site play any part in deciding that the interest in the band was still strong and that the time was right for a new record? Who's idea was the studio journal and what did you hope to achieve with that?*
Colin - Yes, the reaction overall has been better than we could have wished for. As far as what our music means to people, I would say that some of it is was good luck on our part and being at the right place and the right time (not knowing it then). Also, it helps that we play music that is from the heart and that Brian can write great DAG NASTY songs. I think we have a unique quality that touches a chord with lots of people and has held up over the years. Much of that also owes to the lyrics.
Dave - As for the studio diary, it was a great idea, but not mine!
Fracture - *Why do you think that the "Can I Say" line-up is considered the definitive Dag line up? It's neither the original or the longest together?*
Colin - Honestly, I meet people who like all of our line-up configurations (whether with Shawn, Dave, or Brian), but in retrospect the

Bri Baker, man of many talents...



Well, maybe not!

"Can I Say" line-up was the strongest (listen to the live tracks on the newly remastered Dischord "Can I Say" CD if you need proof), as was that album. Roger, Brian, and I just click so well musically that we make a great backbone for Dave, and Dave makes the most of DN's music. The musical chemistry between the four of us just clicks. After being apart from one another in a studio for nearly 10 years, it literally took 30 minutes of playing together for us to sound like a band again. I think we were all a bit surprised as to how easy it was (thanks in a large part to Brian's great song writing and his advance work with Steve Hansgen in putting together the demo tapes of new material).

Dave - Sometimes you just get lucky in life, as Joe Strummer once put it. For him, he said he was lucky that Bernie Rhodes was in the audience when he was having a great gig one night with the 101ers. For me, it was finding these three guys, and a main songwriter, Brian, whose playing really ignites me. There's no doubt to me that, despite whatever any of us have done in other musical configurations with other bands or players, this band with these four guys is linked together in a really special musical bond. And believe me, that doesn't happen everyday. It's a very lucky, very rare thing.

Fracture - *I gather there are no plans to tour, so what are your realistic expectations for the record? Do they differ from Revelation's? Was there any pressure from them to get DAG NASTY out on the road?*

Colin - Of course REV are willing to do whatever they can to get us on the road, even for a few weeks and, honestly, if we do something, it would be a few shows - not a full on tour. For me, one of the most depressing things is when a great band "reunites" and the reunion last far longer than the original configuration. The best example that comes to my mind is the BUZZCOCKS. After the 2nd or 3rd reunion tour I gave up on them as the material they were releasing has been by and large just average, and not up to the quality they had prior to their original break up. In some cases, like ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN - the results are just horrific and they would have been much better never to have hit the stage after their drummer passed away. The fact that we all have other lives / careers and do not NEED to tour makes this so much easier. If we do decide to do some shows in the future, they will be limited and it will first and foremost be about having fun. It would be great to get to Europe and the UK as we never had a chance to do that. We'll see what happens.

Dave - I agree that most reunion tours are lame - BUT - I also think there can be good ones. I personally loved the SEX PISTOLS "Filthy Lucre" tour a few years back, for instance. And DOWN BY LAW toured with the BUZZCOCKS in the States and I thought they were amazing. Most important to me is how much it meant to the audience; you could see it in their eyes. It was the real deal, it was why people make music and become fans of bands. We never did much touring in DAG NASTY, and never made it to Europe, so I really hope we can make something happen at some point. My perfect scenario would be two weeks in the States, two in Europe and a few shows in Japan and Australia.

Fracture - *Lyrically, the album is almost a call to arms, in particular 'Bottle This' and 'the title track 'Minority Of One' yet at the same time infused with age and experience. Was there any discussion on what direction they should take or is Dave just given free reign?*

Colin - We all trusted Dave 100% to come up with lyrics that fit in with our past history yet addressed where we all were in 2002 as opposed to 1986. There are countless convincing arguments for more urgent lyrics than there were in 1986 (look at our current President for 100+ good reasons, read "Stupid White Men", "Fast Food Nation" or countless other books for 1000's of great other reasons to be pissed off at the shape our world is in today).

Dave - I hope this record feels very valid for older punk listeners who still feel proud and inspired by earlier days, but who also have to pay bills and have had serious relationships, weddings, divorces, children - life in all its myriad tragedies and triumphs. It's punk rock for the real world, I guess you could say. I don't know if my lyrics will speak that much to a 15 year old who loves SUM 41, but I think they will speak to people in their 20's, 30's and 40's, and that's really important to me.

Fracture - *I gather a lot of the song-writing was done by Brian and then tapes sent out. Colin, did you find it easy to fly in from Portland to DC and to record the album with just one days' rehearsal? How about for Roger, does he play regularly in a band still? Is he still up to speed?*

Colin - Here's a shout out to my boy Roger who did an amazing job preparing for the album using his Rockman device. I have been playing regularly and was lucky to have had a space to practice to Brian's tapes and a band working my butt off to keep me fresh and getting me ready for the "Minority of One" recording. Roger got up to speed all by himself through self-motivation and it really shows on the CD.

Dave - Rog was great. It gets back to that whole clicking thing Colin mentioned earlier. Colin and Roger are the most naturally-linked rhythm section you could ever dare to hope for. We all just felt like hey, here we are at Inner Ear making a DAG NASTY record - it was as natural as making fun of mullets.

Fracture - *Did any of you read Mark Andersen's "Dance Of Days"* *book about the DC hardcore scene over the last twenty or so years? Interesting though most of the book is, I thought he was particularly scathing about DAG NASTY's 'rockstar attitudes' and their move to a major? Did you feel that this was a fair portrayal or that the band's role in the whole DC was kinda overlooked?*

Colin - I read the book last winter and DAG NASTY certainly gets a bad rap in the book. I find it sort of ridiculous that I get "off the hook" because I am a vegetarian and had been involved in more political activist activities. Truth be told, DAG NASTY wanted to live off of our music (not get rich or even have a middle-class living - that was unheard of for punk bands in 1986 - 87). Each of us at times were immature, impatient, snotty, but I would not say we had a rock star attitude during all of my time in the band. Mark Andersen and some others in DC would only be happy if the Shawn Brown version of DAG NASTY had broken up when he was dismissed. I'm certainly glad that didn't happen. At the time, our somewhat instant success pissed people off in D.C. when Dave joined the band. However, we worked our butts off to achieve that success. "Dance of Days" to me is more about a book written about the "cool kids" coming from the perspective of personality versus music (not to say that some of those people haven't made amazing music). For whatever reasons, at some point in time Brian rubbed Mr. Andersen the wrong way and it came back to haunt us in his book - unjustly so in my opinion. We were always true to ourselves and our music, we were as punk as anyone else at the time, we just happen to have not fit into the idea of how Mark Andersen thought a D.C. band should have been. That's life, not everyone sees eye to eye.

Dave - I agree completely, and would just add that a much better book is Steve Blush's "American Hardcore", which I think is far less judgemental and a lot more fun to read.

Fracture - *This issue of Fracture is focusing on the growing divide between DIY punk ideals and the rise of a more mainstream 'mall punk'. Knowing a couple of you as I do I have always been impressed at your continuing spirit of independence but do you ever think or regret that, if DAG NASTY were a new band emerging in 2002, you'd be up there selling thousands of records and setting yourselves up for a pretty comfortable lifestyle?*

Colin - At 36 years old, "mall punk", if that's what you call SUM 41, etc. is extremely bland and non-heartfelt. Sure, those mall punks can play their instruments quite well and the recording technology is amazing today, but without heart and soul - who gives a crap? My guess is that 10 years from SUM 41 will be like Hootie and the Blowfish, in fact that's a perfect comparison - mall punk today is the Hootie of 5 - 10 years back. I'm glad the DIY thing forges ahead, without that I wouldn't still be playing music today. People are not as stupid as they seem. While the sound of mall punk versus DIY punk may be similar, fans know the difference and the lyrics convey different realities. Today's SUM 41 fan will buy the KID ROCK CD next month and then whatever corporate musical diarrhoea that comes next.

Dave - It's like the difference between buying fruit at the farmer's market and buying it at the grocery store. The fruit you get in the grocery store looks great, but it's covered with pesticides and won't be that juicy. The fruit you buy from the organic farmer's market might be less pretty, have some lumps, but you get the real taste. Juice down your chin, everything you wanted. There's nothing wrong with success - but if it's achieved without soul, then you may as well be working as a stockbroker or salesman or anything else. Art without soul ceases to be art. And far too frequently, soul is missing in mainstream music today, punk or otherwise.

Fracture - *I'm guessing that all of you have been involved in sponsored events like the Warped tour at some point. How do you feel about the increasing role of corporate sponsorship in the punk / hardcore scene? And where do you draw the line personally?*

Colin - That's tough to say… a product like Vans, that has always been connected to punk, long before it was cool, is totally different than Doritos or M&M's. Bands should make the call themselves as should consumers, but large corporate sponsorships unconnected to the music or culture make me quite wary.

Dave - Yep, Vans is the real deal company. They rule as shoes and the people who run it rule as people.

Fracture - *What are your opinions on the complicated issue of file-sharing and internet piracy? Is it really any worse that tape trading back in the day?*

Colin - This issue is another complex one, but I am hoping that major labels as we know them are wiped out in the next few years and the $18 CD becomes a thing of the past. I also hope that the smaller independents are able to survive and continue putting out fresh, innovative, and heartfelt music. At the same time, I also hope that more bands can earn a decent middle-class living through the restructuring of music distribution. We'll see. It will be interesting to watch and be involved.

Dave - Napster actually inadvertently really hurt mid-level bands, like DOWN BY LAW for instance. Kids would come up to me and say "I really loved the new record - I downloaded my favourite five songs from Napster." For a band that sells say, 50,000 copies, it can make a huge difference quickly when that starts happening. Internet piracy definitely helps people discover completely unknown bands, and the big bands really didn't notice (although I respected METALLICA for going out on a limb). But the mid-level bands, that already had a following but not enough to withstand the hit of losing say 10,000 album sales, it actually hurt, through no one's fault. I think we need to get to an MP3 type thing where people can download their favourite songs and the artists can get paid at least the proportional amount of money for that song out of the whole of what the album would have made. Basically an easy, accurate pay-per-download global kind of deal, so if you download three songs from a twelve-song CD you pay one quarter of the album cost. If you didn't want to buy the whole CD, you get the songs you want, and the artist gets a fair share to help feed his kids. It's going to happen, it's just a question of time really, like most things in life.

Fracture - *Do any of you think that the hidden track on the new album should have been more hidden? It's no 'My Cat is a Dog' now is it? For the next record, if there is one, can we see more of Colin's hip-hop influence coming through?*

Colin - I think the hidden track is fine as is. As 'My Dog is a Cat' shows, we have the ability to get much goofier - we'll see what happens in the future.

Dave - GENERATION X rules. 'Nuff said!

Check out DAG NASTY at their website www.daghouse.com

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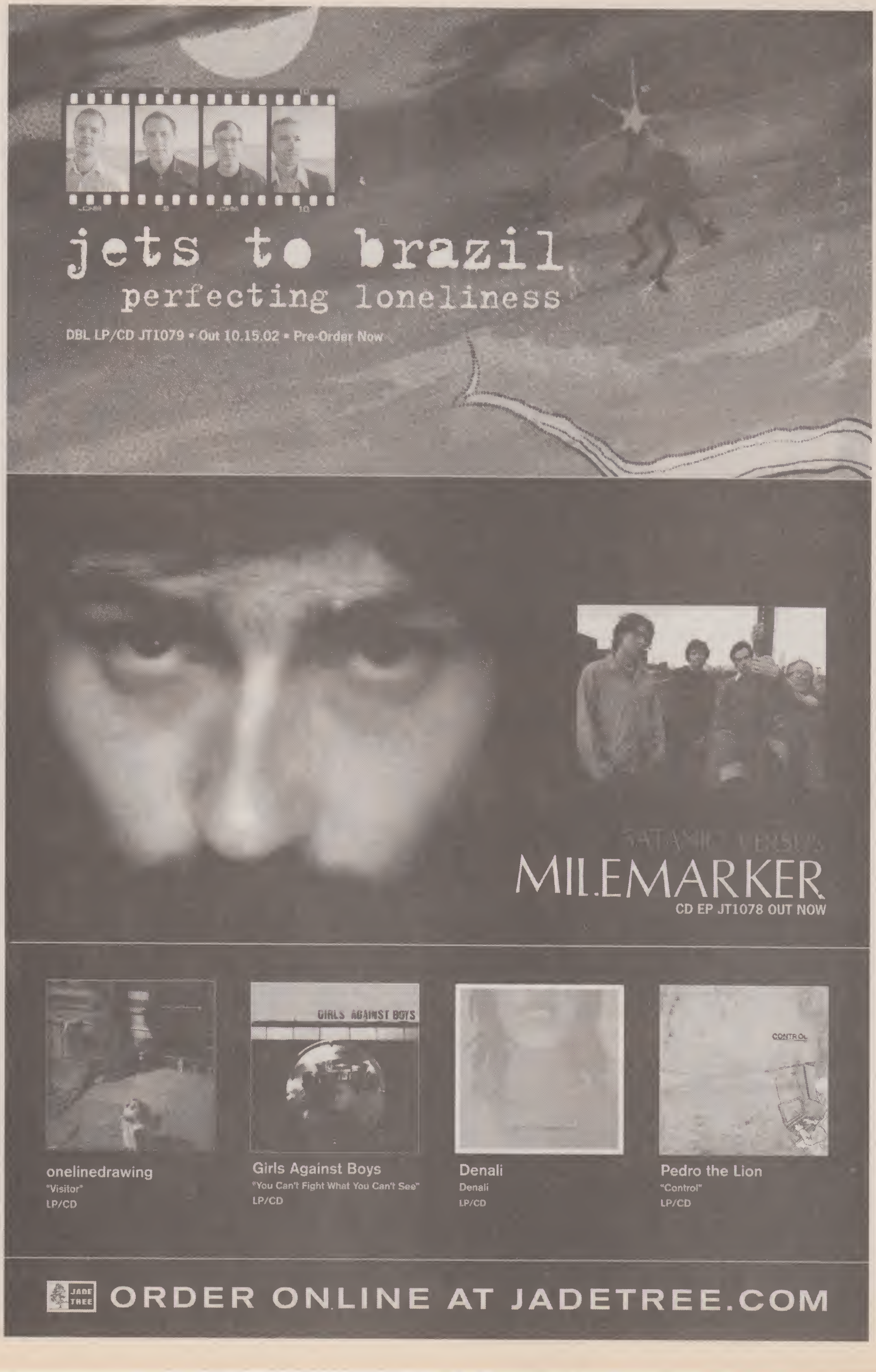
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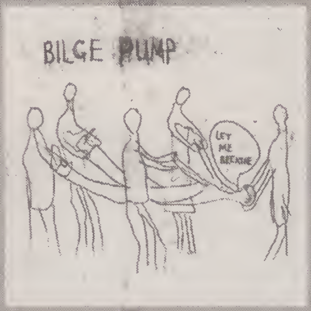
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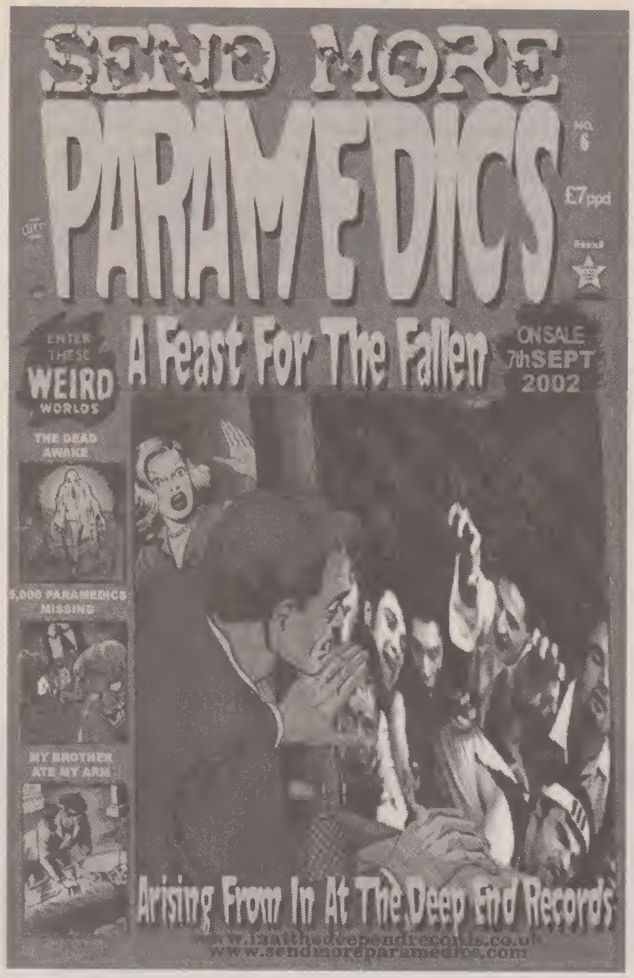
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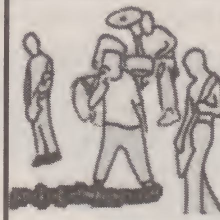

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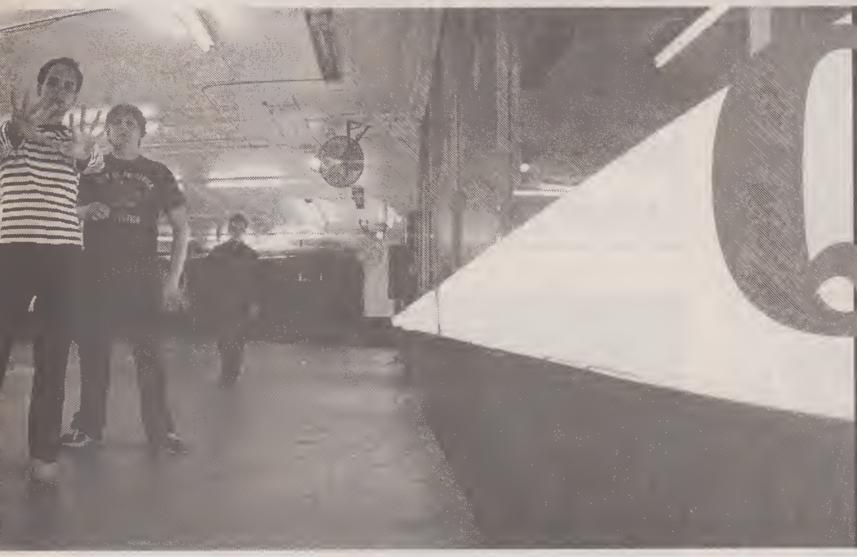


Q AND

interview with:
john davis (drums, vocals)
chris richards (guitar, vocals, keyboard)

Fracture - *So, who plays what and where did the name come from?*

John - My name is John Davis and I play drums and percussion. Chris Richards sings and plays guitar, bass, melodica, bass synth and percussion. Harris Klahr sings, plays guitar, baritone guitar, keyboards and percussion. The name came from the idea of how in the English language all non-proper nouns that start with q are followed with a u. Harris suggested Q AND NOT U and we went with it.

Fracture - *So far you've released the "No Kill, No Beep Beep" album and a new single "On Play Patterns". How do you feel about both and how has the band changed since "No Kill..." and the departure of the bassist?*

John - I like "No Kill No Beep Beep," but it does feel like a different band when I listen to it now. It feels very young and definitely a weird mix of what was at that point our recent pasts and our near futures. I can find many flaws with that record, but I think there are a lot of really great things about it too. "On Play Patterns" is something I'm proud of 'cause it was the first release of ours as a trio and it also represented, to me, us being able to make music that I liked more than anything we'd made before, even though we were only about two months into our time as a trio when we recorded it.

Fracture - *How much did your bass guitarist, Matt Borlik, leaving the band affect the music / sound of the new single (apart from the obvious lack of bass) and how much will it affect the new full-length, "Different Damage"? I noticed the use of keyboards on the single...*

Chris - We've certainly changed a bit, but it's hard to say how much of that is related to our line up shift. We're using more instruments, but I hope that they all contribute to the songs in a meaningful fashion. People are worried about a lack of "bass" but we're still playing bass frequencies. Just with keyboards, drums, bass guitars and baritone guitars.

John - I feel we're a different band now. In many ways, I feel very disconnected to the band we were as a quartet. I think we are more open to experimentation now and also more interested in finding melody. We're definitely using more instruments now, but what I like about it is how natural it feels. When we went to a trio, I know that I felt like I could try anything. Sometimes it worked, sometimes it didn't. But I was free to try anything musically and I can really hear it in this record. I don't even know what the effect would be if anyone else had left, unless it was me, 'cause then there's no way the band would be good anymore if I was gone. Don't tell them I said that, though.

Fracture - *The new single has a more relaxed; less chaotic sound to it than "No Kill..." - does the new album have the same sort of feel to it?*

John - I think the single is certainly more representative of our sound than "No Kill" is. A lot of the screamy element of that first record is gone so yes, I think the vibe of the single has definitely carried over to the album. But, I do think the album is a more refined and comfortable version of our sound as a trio. When we recorded the single, as I said, we'd only been a trio for two months and hadn't even played a show as a trio yet. When we recorded the album we had at least had the benefit of playing some shows and getting the time to get more comfortable as a trio, which is something we're still doing.

Fracture - *I take it you recorded it with Ian Mackaye and Don Zientara, like both your other Dischord releases, how did it go this time?*

John - I think it was the best recording yet. I really enjoyed the session for the single we recorded in January (which was the "On Play Patterns" single) too, but recording "Different Damage" was a longer session of course and I liked how much we were able to work on those songs in the studio. Some of them really changed and one of them was written entirely in the studio, which was a first for us. Working with Ian and Don is always a great experience. They're both extremely knowledgeable about music and the process of recording. They're excellent at providing new ideas, pushing you to try something different and keeping people mellow. It's almost always a positive scene when we're in the studio, which is not something I'd expect.

Fracture - *So how do Q AND NOT U write songs? Is it a jam process, where everything comes out collectively, or does someone come in with song parts and ideas, and the rest put something to it?*

John - Songs come about in different ways for us. Sometimes one of us comes in with a part or two and then we play it together and build a song. Other times, we just jam and a song comes together that way. I think most of the new songs were built from parts we came up with in jams. But there's one song where I had some guitar parts that I had written on my own that we used as a song. I played guitar, Harris played drums and Chris played guitar and it totally changed how I thought it would sound. And, then, I went back to drums and Harris went back to guitar and it changed even further.

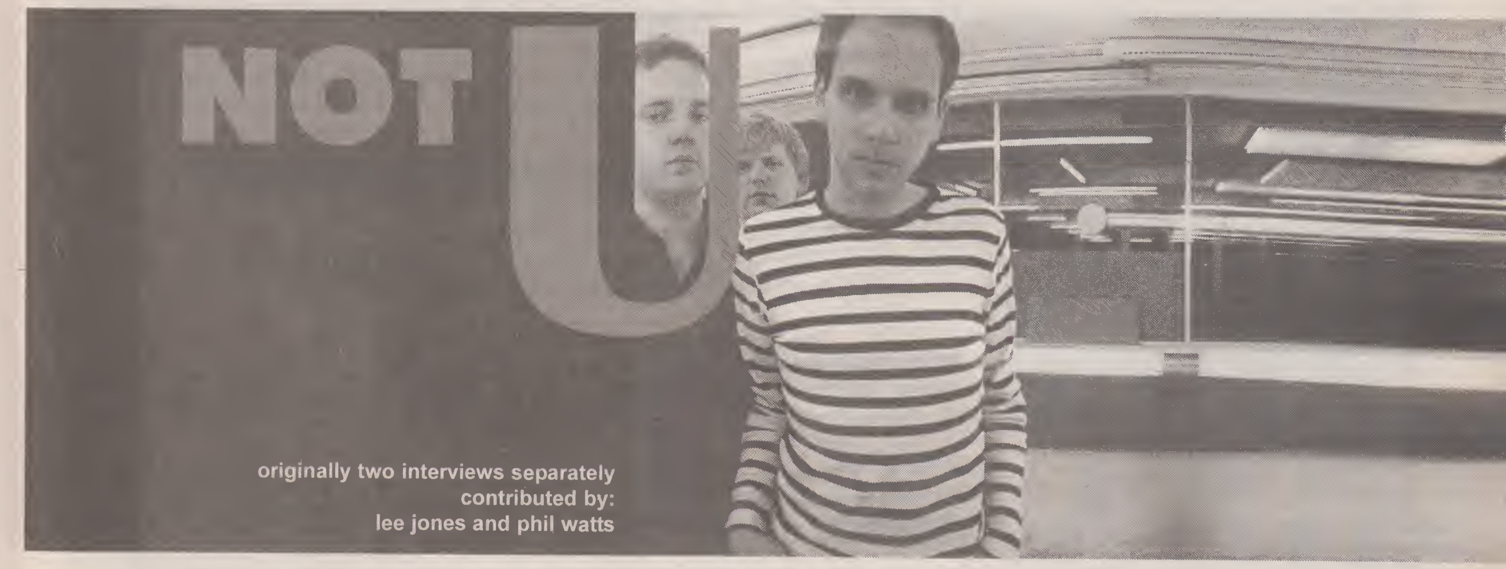
Fracture - *I find the idea of Q AND NOT U being a dance band particularly interesting. How much is audience participation a part of this? The idea of 'dance' seems to go beyond the idea of music simply being part-of the 'rock' or 'punk' genre, towards an energy...*

Chris - I agree with your ideas on this, especially because dancey-style-punk is becoming a cute little cache in America right now. Every magazine's talking about punk-disco-electroclash blah blah blah. I guess they're attempting to announce the pop-radar birth while actually delivering the underground deathblow. When I think about attempting to play dance-music, I think of it in terms of a folk-ish presentation. I would hope our shows could evoke something communal and physical with the audience. A direct exchange. I think that's what true dance music would be, not just referencing EARTH WIND & FIRE or LIQUID LIQUID or something.

John - I like the idea of being in a dance band, for sure. A great deal of what I listen to is dance music, so it's only natural that it's going to rub off on our sound, especially since I'm the drummer. I think we're also a punk band too, though, and the mix of those things is what makes it really interesting for me. Audience participation definitely helps make the show feel like more of a communion, and that is pretty important to me. I like to see our music effect people and watching people dance or hearing them sing is such an immediate and gratifying response. But we only play what comes natural to us. And if we're a dancey punk band right now, then so be it.

Fracture - *I read somewhere that Harris said you may be considered "a dance band in that we try to emulate what electronic instruments can do with slightly more organic instruments"...*

Chris - I never thought of it that way, but I guess Harris must be chasing that idea. I think I can hear it in his playing. Well, just technically, we have keyboards now. Does that make our music more "electronic?" I don't know. Most of the time, music made with electronic instruments (meaning keyboards, drum machines and the like) can be quite texturally inviting, but very structurally distant. A lot of the electronic music I've heard rests on the laurels of its wonderful sonic textures, but doesn't really explore composition as much as it could. I guess that's often the point. I think my personal interest in elec-



originally two interviews separately
contributed by:
lee jones and phil watts

tronic sounds is more textural. I really like what bands like ADULT and XIU XIU and EL GUAPO are doing with that sort of thing. Ultimately, I think my bone with electronic music would be that I need to hear people fuck up.

Fracture - *Have you recorded the Neil Young cover of "Don't Let It Bring You Down" (for the forthcoming Vietnam Veteran's Benefit compilation on Exotic Fever Records) yet? The idea of one of my current favourite bands covering one of my all-time favourite recording artists is really exciting. Tell us about your personal history with Neil…*

Chris - We all adore Neil Young, but John is certainly the most passionate. He has Neil Young album covers framed in his bedroom. It's that serious. We listened to "Trans" (his electronic album) a lot on our last tour. What an incredible piece of work that thing is! Very fascinating stuff if you're deep into Neil Young. Anyway, "After the Gold Rush" is most certainly my favourite album of his, and "Don't Let it Bring You Down" seemed really appropriate for us. My friend Yukiko was originally going to sing it with us, but it never worked out, and we actually ended up doing multiple tracks of group vocals. It sounds like a rag-tag boys choir. We recorded it the same time as "On Play Patterns," and we're still really excited about it. Exotic Fever promises that the compilation will be out this Fall, but you know how comps go. They're working hard! Oh, their website is www.exoticfever.com. It's a great site, that actually has tons of practical information for people visiting DC.

John - Neil Young is definitely my number one musical hero. I just love his music, his aesthetic, his passion for music and experimentation and his disinterest in what people think of his art. I have just about every one of his records and really admire his penchant for dabbling in different styles. And that fact that it usually works is even more amazing to me. He's made his name with folk-rock (including "Comes A Time," my favourite album of his) and proto-grunge, but his forays into KRAFTWERK-style techno-rock ("Trans") and rockabilly ("Everybody's Rockin'") were often as compelling, at least for their sheer gall. And not to mention how painfully raw some of his records, like "Tonight's The Night" and "Sleeps With Angels," could be and how deft he was at expressing emotion without being maudlin. I could go on and on about Neil Young, so I'll stop there. But I will say that I'd like to see what Neil would have to say about our cover of "Don't Let It Bring You Down." I'm very proud of our version and I'd like him to hear it.

Fracture - *Any other future covers planned?*

Chris - We really wanted to cover that song "Music" by MADONNA when it came out a couple years back. Then Harris had an idea to do a seven inch where we could cover MADONNA, as well as a song by CRASS, or WOODIE GUTHRIE, or PUBLIC ENEMY or something. The idea would be that one song would be by a pop-star singing about social politics, while the other song would be a political group or artist singing about love. Sadly, it never worked out. And now covering that MADONNA song might seem a little campier than it did right when it came out. We hoped the immediacy would have killed the irony, but now it's probably too late.

John - We're still trying to master our own songs at this point. Every once in a while I'll hear a great song and think how I'd like to cover it, though the feeling usually passes.

Fracture - *You're still very much an underground band, especially here in the UK, how do you feel about the independent DIY scene, considering you're a DC band, and as such have surely been heavily involved in the infamous Washington indie / punk scene?*

John - I think the independent scene in the US is still strong, even though some unsavoury developments have arisen within it. I don't have a problem with booking agents, publicists (especially since that was a job I worked for a while), etc. in a broad way. I know a number of people who do those jobs for indie bands in an ethical and honest way. And that's cool. But, I'm not into some of the more ruthless and ego-driven examples of those professions. I think it takes away much of what is good about the independent scene. But those things aside, I do still feel there is a strong underground movement here. Bands still tour and kids still set up shows and do zines, even if the way it gets done changes over the years.

Fracture - *Being on Dischord, you're are often lumped into the "Dischord sound" category. At least here in the U bands are often described as sounding "Dischord-y", and you're often over looked as an individual band. Do you mind or is it good being compared to your influences and label mates?*

John - It's not a big deal to me 'cause I generally don't pay attention to it. We're proud of the label we're on and if someone wants to compare us to the other bands on the label, I can only take it as a compliment, regardless of how it was intended. But, I also think that someone who says we sound "Dischordy" doesn't really have much of a clue as to the history of the label. There are so many bands that have put out strong records on Dischord that it's uninformed to say that there has been only one "sound" to come out of the label.

Fracture - *How alive is the DC scene, both musically and politically? When we interviewed Mark Anderson and Mark Jenkins about their book "Dance of Days" they seemed very focused on the idea of the future…*

Chris - That's nice, because the book seemed to sometimes suggest that the "magic" could never be recreated. I love watching the music that grows in Washington DC, and it's always been a very interesting timeline for me. Right now, things are on full blast for the summer. DC is hosting Ladyfest in August, Positive Force is getting ready for the Anti-Capitalist Convergence this Fall, bands play for free every Monday and Thursday at Fort Reno Park all summer, there are some great DJ nights in town. It's wonderful. (Oh, you can check www.fortreno.com, and www.ladyfestdc.com too).

John - There are plenty of great bands in town right now. BLACK EYES, MEASLES MUMPS RUBELLA, DAME FATE, FUGAZI, EL GUAPO and DISMEMBERMENT PLAN are just a short list. There's always a lot happening here. I can't see it ever ending.

Fracture - *Finally, how much are you looking forward to the European tour in November (particularly the UK)?*

Chris - I am so stunned and excited by the whole idea. I can't even get my head around it. To think that people on the other side of the planet care about our work is really phenomenal to us. But I really need to study my European geography, it's quite embarrassing. So many nice people have written to us from Europe, especially the UK, so we're really excited to get over there. Our new record will be out by then, so we're anticipating a very nice time.

John - Well, of course, I can't wait to get over there. First off, I've never been to Europe, so that'll be cool. But, mainly, I just like the idea of playing all of these places that we've never played before. It'll be interesting to see how touring in Europe is different from touring here, in all of the many ways. Plus, I'm sure we'll meet a whole bunch of good people as well. ■

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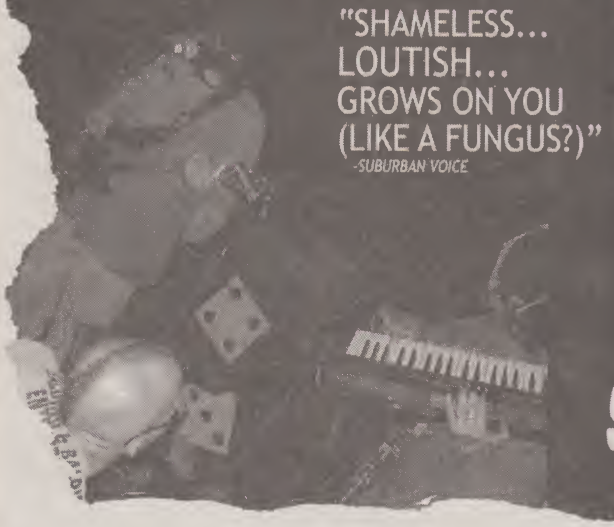

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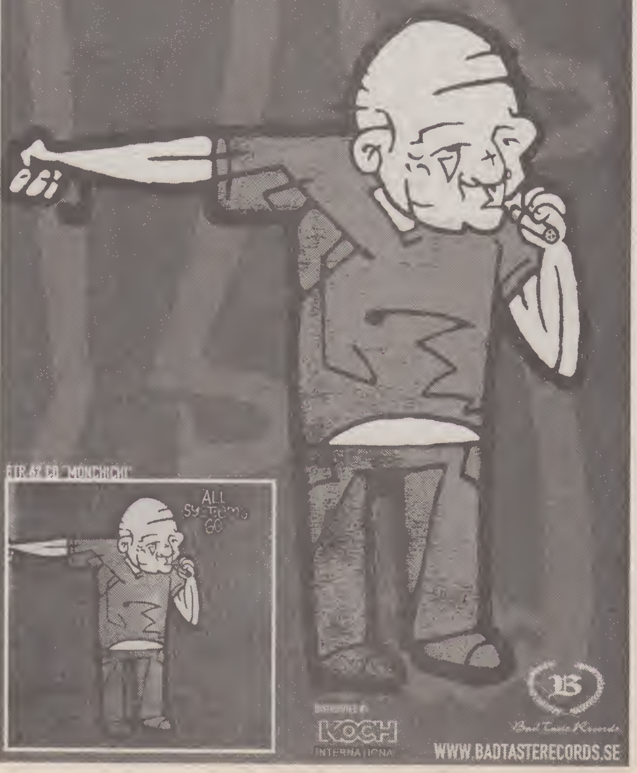
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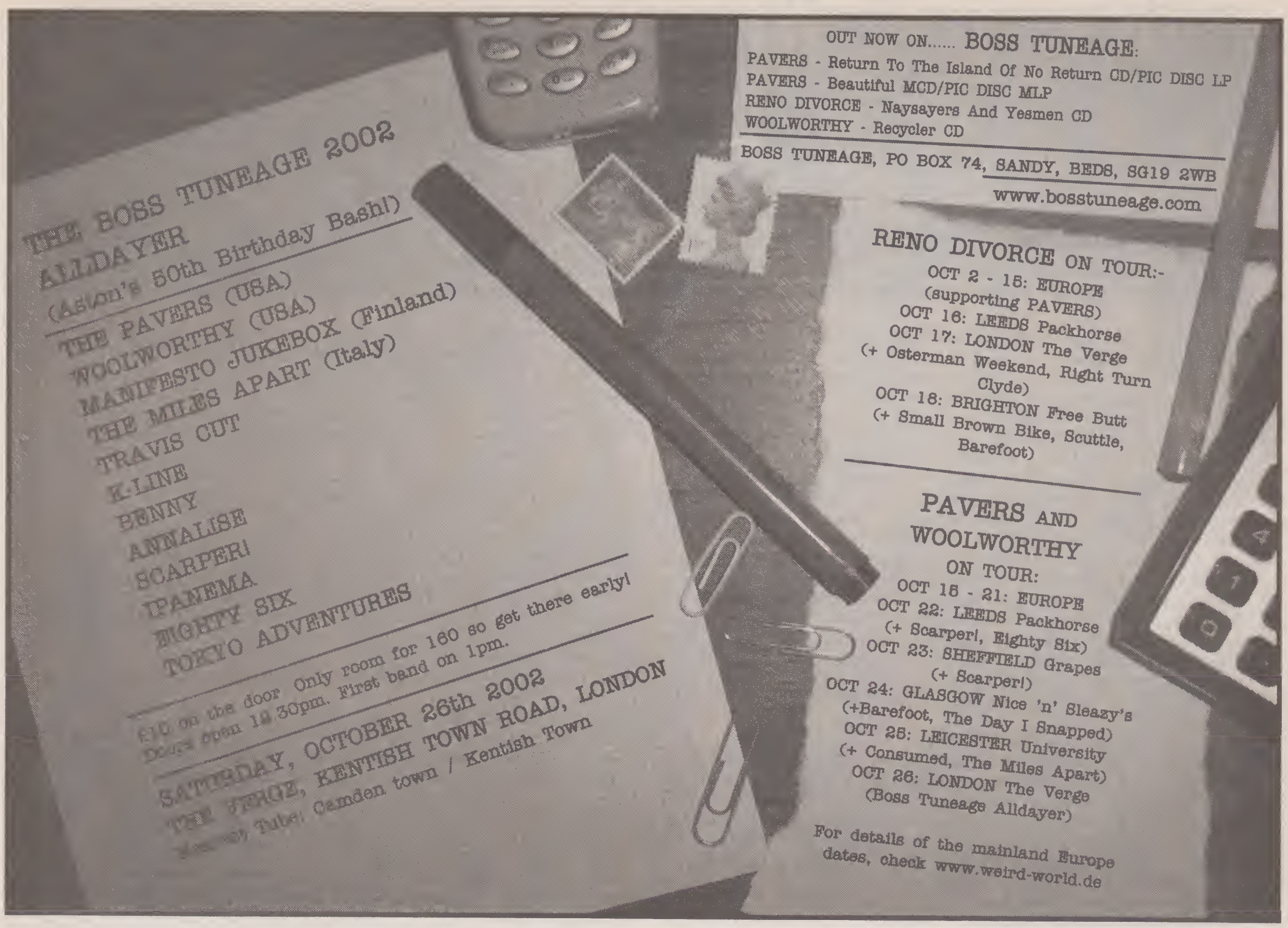

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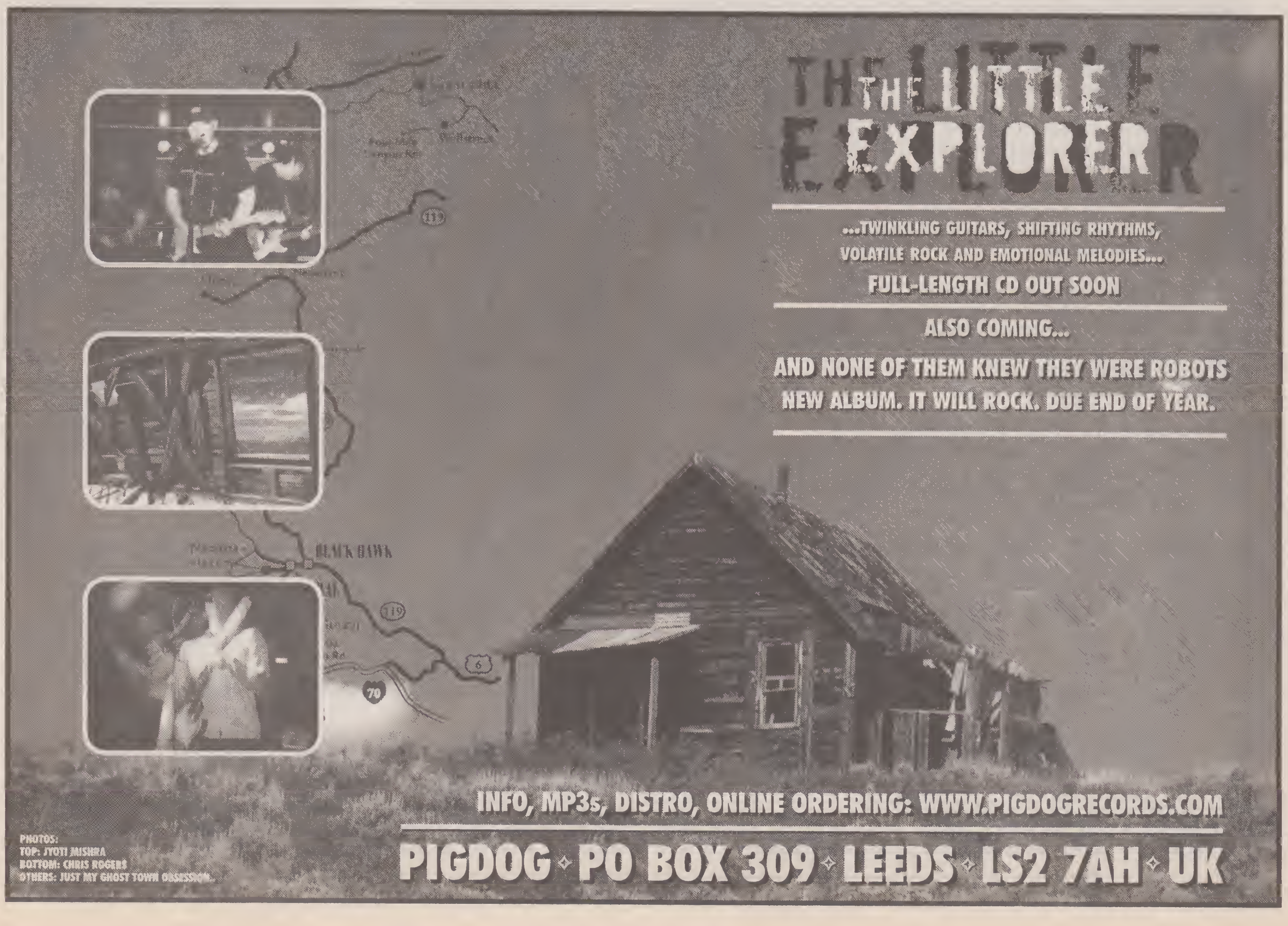

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Record Reviews

"Shit, they've removed the pretty pictures, what will I look at now?". Read the reviews instead. Here's the low-down: this temporary text-fest review section is to clear a backlog. We get enough stuff for review these days to fill up the whole zine. We don't want that. We also don't want to invoke any sort of crap review policy - we like reviewing "non punk" stuff, we like in-depth reviews, we don't even mind barcodes (much). Next issue we'll have something different sorted, so you might have pretty pictures to look at then. In the meantime: read!

THE PEOPLE TO BLAME

Monk Dave (MD), Russell Remains (RR), David Stuart (DS), Graham Sleightholme (FU), James Doe (JD) Hilary Ellis (HE), Gaz Suspect (GS), Dan McKee (DM), Sean McKee (SM), Mel Hughes (MH), Pete Craven (PC), Tom Craven (TC)

4-SKINS, THE - "The Good, The Bad & The 4-Skins" CD/ 57:36.
Classic London Oi! from a band who struggled through many setbacks before they could get to this album. They were involved in a riot that had connotations of being racially motivated, they lost their original (and best) singer and drummer. When they got back on the road they were put down by a lot of folks because of bad performances, things weren't looking good. But they managed to get the album out, it's one studio side and a live side, a bit of a cop-out in anyone's book to be truthful, but the live side shows the band playing in front of a volatile crowd, and as much stick as they get, vocalist Panther manages to handle it with aplomb. Classics like "Chaos", "Wonderful World" and "A.C.A.B." are a real treat, but you can't help wonder what they might've done to these in the studio. The studio side is classic proto-thug street rock, aside from "Plastic Gangsters" which pays homage to early MADNESS without apology. "Yesterdays Heroes", in my opinion, is the best song they wrote and they did have a knack for writing simple, yet effective songs with subtle melodies. The vocals are a bit ropey in places it has to be said, but that's part of the charm. There are 5 bonus tracks and this re-issue comes in a great looking digi-pack with poster. One of the original Oi! bands who influenced thousands of bands world over. Yep, this is a classic and I often spin the original vinyl, so this is a welcome addition to the DS Oi! CD collection, thanks to Monk Dave it's been building very nicely this past year or so! *(DS)*
CAPTAIN Oi!, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, HP10 8QA, UK.

17 STITCHES - " The Antisocial EP" CD/ 19:01.
This CD has a very youthful, angry young punks feel to it. The music seems to combine an early 80's UK Punk sound with the smooth flow of today's American bands like the ANTI-FLAG and 98 MUTE. Lyrically its up to scratch for me as well, with songs about war and the system we live under, all things that must not be forgotten if we ever want to improve our lot. The only 'low point' on this CD is the cover of the ANGELIC UPSTARTS classic "Police Oppression". Some things are possibly best left and maybe this was one of them! *(GS)*
DISCLOCATE, PO Box 321, Durham, DH7 0YG, UK.

46 ITCHY - "Jack's Creation" CD/ 20:24.
Ya know, putting a ska-punk CD in my review pile is like putting a mouse into the tank of a Burmese python. I'll ignore it at first, then it'll irritate the fuck out of me and finally I'll lose patience and crush it. But unlike a good girlfriend, I won't swallow. I'll spit it back out with disgust and curse the foul taste it has left in my mouth. But you know what, I'm in a good mood right now and I'm feeling like I could maybe handle a little generic ska-punk if I put my mind to it. To be honest this isn't bad at all, at least they have a good sound and actually write some solid songs, which are catchy and enjoyable. This has all those LESS THAN JAKE attributes and I'm also reminded of MUSTARD PLUG and BUCK-O-NINE (yep, it's sad, I know a little about ska-punk, well I used to until it got swamped with second and third-rate wannabe Jakes) and to these ears they are almost as good as those bands on every level. Confident and upbeat, they can certainly play and write songs that are incredibly infectious and instantly likeable, hell I'm impressed and considering that this is one of my least favourite musical genres... it must be something very special to get by without critical crucifixion. *(DS)*
TODDLER / www.46itchy.com

764 HERO - "Nobody Knows This Is Everywhere" CD/ 48:05.
It's a horrible word, but "mediocre" is the only one that comes to mind listening to this Seattle indie pop band's last release. It poodles along with moments of charm, but there is nothing instantly affectionate about the release. Think musically solid, BUILT TO SPILL, think MODEST MOUSE but it's not fantastic. *(HE)*
TIGER STYLE / www.tigerstylerecords.com

A MODEST PROPOSAL - "Of Memories and Dreams" CD/ 38:31.
Sorry but this just ain't my thang. Okay, good jangly guitars and a pretty good, throaty vocal performance which, unfortunately, reminds me of the HOT WATER MUSIC vocalist too much. Is he ripping him off? Maybe. Do I really know my emo? Not really. *(JD)*
STRANGE FRUIT, Silcherstrase 31, 73329 Kuchen, Germany.

ADAM WEST - "Ready Steady Adam West" CD/ 59:20.
I'm ignoring the minimal "People Like You" promo packaging, and concentrating 100% on a silver disc the cardboard retainer contains - Washington D.C's most Hard Rockin' exponents ADAM WEST, fronted by Bon Scott couldabeen Jake Starr... d'ya think he was christened that way?? Disc is a 20tracker trawling together rare/b-side/comp shit from '93 - '99. There's MISFITS covers, and originals besides where Glenn 'n the Boys influence has rubbed off, plus a faithful "Search and Destroy"... man, can you believe STOOGES standards being used on the BBC to nationally advertise an Athletics Festival. Although with all that dope taking going on I can see what they're getting at. Few choice rip 'n tearers, like "Speedbumb" "I Get A Sensation" and "Beauty" were spot-on, but equally there's a fair number of sludgier rockout SABS / SKYNRD numbers that failed to ignite. *(PC)*
PEOPLE LIKE YOU...

ADICTS, THE - "Sound of Music" CD/ 42:02.
Early 1980's *"funny punk"* from a band once loved by thousands of punk rockers for their wacky clockwork orange look and silly songs. This is a re-issue of their second album and it was about this time that their one-dimensional brand of guitar pop started to wear a little thin, by the next record they had lost the plot completely. At the time, The ADICTS were relief from a punk scene dominated by songs about war, Thatcher and unemployment. The singer "Monkey" wore clown make up and the rest of the band dressed like Clockwork Droogs in bowler hats and white clothes. This album starts off very strongly with one of my favourite ADICTS songs "How sad" and "Chinese Takeaway", the cheesiest of crappy pop songs, but with that certain worthless charm that makes *"pop"* so palatable at times. The album soon runs out of fizz and basically they didn't have a lot of ideas, musically or lyrically. There are 3 bonus tracks that don't help the cause, including an insipid GLITTER BAND style version of "I wanna be sedated" and the Anfield signature song "You'll never walk alone". As I said, this was a popular band and they sold a lot of records at the time, but 20 years is a long time and these guys haven't faired well at all I'm afraid. I recall they really turned to shit after this record and changed their name to the FUN ADICTS and ADX so they could do some TV work... they then *"conquered"* America... yeah right. America gave us TheDEAD KENNEDYS, BLACK FLAG, MINOR THREAT, BAD BRAINS etc. etc and we gave them the fucking ADICTS and the EXPLOITED. I think we fucking duped them huh? Big in Ipswich apparently, must be the water supply. *(DS)*
CAPTAIN Oi!, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, HP10 8QA, UK.

ADICTS, THE - "Smart Alex" CD/ 63:31.
I sometimes wonder why I've not got that many ADICTS records on my shelf at home, but having received this CD for review I now know why! It could be claimed that the band we're way ahead of their time with the pop-punk sound but I'm not making excuses for what I consider to be a poor outing for the band. They had just come to the end of their association with Sire records who did their best to make them commercial and sell! But alas dropped them because this did not work, but for some reason the band saw fit to carry on in this vein! Check out the costumes the band are wearing on the back cover of the CD if you wanna see what I mean. Talk about entertaining the working classes at Butlins for the weekend! By about track seven "Bad Boy" the band have degenerated musically to little more than a second rate SHOWADDYWADDY or MUD. Very occasionally there are reminders of the early ADICTS but sadly all the effort of trying to get into the charts for a couple of years in the mid eighties had exhausted the bands ability to put together a tune for these ears to rave about. If I thought the music was bad then I won't go into the lyrics! One for the collector (which I'm not!) and as ever full marks to Captain Oi for making this available again even though it's not my cuppa (that's it Gaz, you really are sacked this time!). *(GS)*
CAPTAIN Oi!, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, HP10 8QA, UK.

ADICTS, THE - "Fifth Overture" CD/ 53:54.
The liner notes say:"*1986 was a downtime for punk rock*" and this epitomises that notion. It's cheesy, pop rock with keyboards and those 80's pop production values. In 2002 this sounds *sooooo* fucking bad. Obviously the band were under the illusion that they were gonna "break big" anytime, but this makes BIG COUNTRY sound like a ragin' punk rock band. I'd never heard this album and apparently it was hard to find and the music press shunned it... I imagine the label buried it and the music press were just doing their job! This wasn't, isn't and never will be punk rock. It's sell out pop rock by a band, who at this period in time, were about as punk rock as Phil Collins. The music's bad, the singer is piss-poor and the lyrics are dreadful. This really is an album that should have stayed buried. *(DS)*
CAPTAIN Oi!, PO Box B01, High Wycombe, HP10 8QA, UK.

AFRAID OF THE DARK - "The Sun is Your Enemy" CD/ 24:20.
Some nice, scrappy punk rock here from Nottingham, England. Track two goes into a slightly more swingy and perhaps 'emo' direction with Penny's female vocals working especially well in the lighter moments. This is a little bit on the innofensive side for me I think, scream! go on there must be something you want to scream about!? Although to be fair song three does pick up the pace with a fairly noisey and fast riff. *(JD)*
HAPPY ASTRONAUT / www.afraidofthedark.co.uk

ALL BORO KINGS - "Just For The Fun Of It" CD/ 42:16.
If you ever held a torch for DOG EAT DOG, then you should know that ABK claim some ex-members of the New York canines, and re-live that same MURPHYS LAW style party spirit. Y'know what I mean, hanging out with all your bro's, skating, barbeques, hi-fives, all that good stuff that happens before jobs, mortgages and girls come along and fuck it all up. Thickly laiden with smooth guitars and singalongs aplenty. I'm not sure if they'd get away with it if they weren't taking advantage of the groundwork DOG EAT DOG made in this genre, and they do cling on to their chosen formula a bit too desperately, but hey, they seem to have good intentions, i.e. bringing the fucking party! *(SM)*
CENTURY MEDIA.

ALL THAT REMAINS - "Behind Silence And Solitude" CD/ 34:45.
If you were keen on SHADOWS FALL'S wonderful 'Sombre Eyes To The Sky' CD from before Brian Fair from OVERCAST took over on vocals, then you may be pleased to read that ALL THAT REMAINS feature that early SHADOWS FALL frontman Phil Labonte, and that the connection between the 2 bands also serves as a good pointer as to their style and sound. So with even catchier guitar leads than the aforementioned CD, and an even more

immediate and imposing delivery, (with less of the acoustics and breathing space of the S.F material) this CD marks out its territory right from its frantic AT THE GATES style first track. Obviously I love it. *(SM)*
LIFEFORCE, PO Box 938, 09009, Chemnitz, Germany.

ALLEGIANCE - "Here Today" CD/ 22:18.
All the way from Japan although not all the members would appear to be from Japan, which is good to see. Well that aside, it has to be said that this band are not the greatest I've ever reviewed as all the songs seem to be the same if I'm honest. Some good lyrics save them but with the vocals a bit like early SPECIAL DUTIES I found this CD hard going in places. However, its always hard to be completely fair in reviews of CD's that you've only played two or three times, you have to make some harsh judgements. I might be being a bit harsh here possibly but I think overall I've just about got it right for what is pretty much standard three chord punk. Lyrics reproduced in English and Japanese. *(GS)*
MCR, 157 Kamiagu, Maizuru, Kyoto 624-0913, Japan.

AMDI PETERSENS ARME - "Blod Ser Mere Virkelict Ud Pa Film" 7".
Quite a rager here from Copenhagen's AMDI PETERSENS ARME. It's pretty rare for a band to sound so totally fucking punk nowadays, so it's great to hear this almost early CIRCLE JERKS sounding, pissed off, native tongue, early LA punk rockage. It's also great to see, as part of the packaging, reproductions of flyers for some of their gigs and the now no more Ungdomshuset squat in Copenhagen - a place I visited a few years ago and impressed me mightily. But yeah, this is a great band, I'd love to hear a full length. *(MD)*
HAVOC, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408, USA.

AND NONE OF THEM KNEW THEY WERE ROBOTS - "Liebestod" CD/ 12:28.
One of my favourite UK bands, these guys rock out big time and happen to be the nicest folks you could want to meet. Their usual brand of rock is of a complex BRAID-like style, but every now and again they go on overdrive and just thrash out the hardcore attack. This EP is total 80s US style hardcore, shouty and angst ridden, but at the same time retaining melody. They cover MINOR THREAT's "No Reason" and stay close to the original. This is a great idea to release these songs, their album will be out in the Winter sometime, I for one can't wait for that, but this will tide me over for the time being, although I have to confess that I like their non-hardcore stuff more! What a fucking sell-out huh? These guys are gonna be huge and the word is spreading around Europe like wild-fire about how awesome they are live. We (Rude To Stare) put them on last week here in London and they blew everyone away, get with the plan, they fucking rule. *(DS)*
IN AT THE DEEP END, 82 Barlow Drive South, Awsworth, NG6 2TD, UK.

ANGELICA - "The Seven Year Itch" CD/ 31:59.
This has seriously grown on me… like a rash! ANGELICA are Lancaster's very own grrrl band with on the one hand complete indie cool surety and serious appeal to the Radio 1 Evening Session set, while on the other hand a simply humble approach to girl meets boy pop. They have their moments of snappiness such as on the opener "I want a piece of the action" but on the whole the songs are laid back, girly guitar ditties. Kat Bjelland, who helps on the production front, makes an appearance on the grungy "Golden Lillies" but the best song of 10 on here is "Liberation is wasted on me" which combines both aspects of ANGELICA's sweet and sour songwriting skills in a most infectious pop melody. *(HE)*
VICTORY WORKS / www.angelicahq.com

ANGER IN MOTION - "Reverends and Rednecks" 7".
Wow, this is just short of incredible. For some reason I know the name, but that's about it. This disbanded band was from Brisbane in Australia and originally released as s demo in 1990. 5 blistering tracks with a real early 80's feel to it. Just think early MDC, early DRI, NEOS, NECROS and a little SIEGE. ANGER IN MOTION is just fucking incredible, that is the bottom line. If you are gonna buy a 7" this year, make sure this is one of them. I cannot stop playing this and this made my whole fucking week. *(MH)*
KANGAROO, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA Amsterdam, Holland.

ANN ARBOR - "Quit Lookin' at Me" CD/ 10:45.
Whathafuck? Psycho electro instrumental metal from Leicester. Here's to you if you like it. For me it's just the wrong side of song, but it is creative. Not bad for two guys and a box. *(HE)*
SEISMIC / www.seismic-records.co.uk

ANTIMANIAX - "As Long As People Think" CD/ 24:36.
This band rock first and foremost for the fact that the first song, 'Chilli Con Tofu' seems to be an actual recipe for a delicious vegan dish but all put to music so this album is not only good to listen to, but it's useful in the kitchen too! Great ska-rdcore release here by a band who sound like AGAINST ALL AUTHORITY playing twister with THE SUICIDE MACHINES whilst listening to something very heavy in the background and thinking a lot about the fucked up world we live in. Intelligent, thoughtful lyrics and a special inclusion of guest MC, renowned linguist Noam Chomsky, on one track doing some fly verbiage on the hypocrisies of terrorism make this band not only fun to dance to but a force for positive change and you can't ever go wrong with them forces for positive change now can you, especially when their tunes are this good. *(DM)*
HOUSEHOLD NAME.

APATIA - "Manpulacja, Zniewolenie" CD/ 30.14.
Killer lyrics, from a killer band. They're kind of a posi-core band, coupled with the likes of early CONFLICT. But more so with the former me think anyway. All played at a fastish pace. Lyrics dealing with life, but with a political slant. Good to see Trujace Fala putting this style out, rather than just explosive crust that they are famous for. *(MH)*
TRUJACA FALA, PO BOX 13, 81-806 Sopot, Poland.

APRIL / CREUTZFELDT - split LP.
A heavy as fuck split LP here from two German bands. Starting with a crazy looped noise intro. that made me think that I was in for a fucked up noise / experimental album (damn it gets me every time!) APRIL kick into some screamed and bellowed hardcore metal. I'm not a big fan of this kind of metal but the riffs and time changes set them in good stead when compared to some of the other terrible metal core you get out there. I just wish they did without the guitar squeals as they remind me of the likes of MACHINE HEAD or somebody. CREUTZFELDT also play a similar kind of ultra screamed and blasting metal which certainly punishes but also tires after a while. Nice artwork though. *(JD)*
BASTARDIZED, PO Box 200521, 56005, Koblenz, Germany.
www.bastardizedrecordings.de

AS FRIENDS RUST - "A Young Trophy Band In The Parlance Of Our Times" CD/ 19:21.
Brilliant ep here from a band I keep hearing the name of but have never got around to hearing until now. Kind of like AVAIL going on a singles holiday, hooking up with ALKALINE TRIO and going off into the sunset together for a bright and blooming future where they live happily ever after. Some excellent lyrics with "The Most Americanest" being the stand-out in this blindly patriotic post September 11th world. *(DM)*
DEFIANCE, Ritterstrasse 52, 50668 Koln, Germany.

ASPHYXIA - "War Drugs" 7".
Pretty standard DOOM, DISCHARGE, MOB 47 styled crust from Japan. These songs were originally released as a demo in the early 90's. It's fast, it's furious. I'm sure you'll dig it. *(MH)*
CRUST WAR, 1-28-3A. Shikitsu, Nishi 2, Naniwa-Ku, Osaka City, 556-0017, Japan.

ATREYU - "Suicide Notes and Butterfly Kisses" CD/ 37:57.
New to Victory Records' varied roster, ATREYU are another band to provide the label with its heavy metal side of hardcore. In fact this is so heavy metal that only the occasional vocal line and almost emo (via eighties metal) section keeps it away from being just straight metal. There's also the odd spiralling semi-math core riff chucked in here and there but what we've got here is mostly a European epic power metal sound akin to the likes of AT THE GATES with 'Maiden-esque noodlings contrasting the more simple hardcore breakdowns. Christ, the hammer-ons and guitar harmonies in fifth song 'Deanne The Arsonist' sound like any eighties metal band you could name! All in all this doesn't excite me very much and the vocalist has got the kind of throaty-not-shouted-hard-enough voice that *really* gets on my tits. *(JD)*
VICTORY, 346 N. Justine, Suite #504 Chicago, IL 60607, USA.
www.victoryrecords.com

AUDIO KARATE - "Space Camp" CD/ 40:49.
OK so this Kung Fu band just wanna be THE ATARIS and Trevor Keith from FACE TO FACE supplies the production for added cheese value, but this kicks ass in a basic boy meets girl, boy dumps girl or girl dumps boy format. This quickly climbs the pile of review material to lodge itself firmly on the CD player - and there goes what's left of my reputation. The boys look pretty young - I'm sure the girls love them. I think I would too if I could relate to song titles like "Senior year", "Nintendo 89" and "Drama Club Romance". But musically they are all there. There is not a lot to say about individual songs as the theme is well known, the music uncomplicated and lyrics predictable, but if you like NO MOTIV, SAVES THE DAY, THE ATARIS and FACE TO FACE then this will fit right into your collection. An easy winner. *(HE)*
KUNG FU, PO Box 38009, Hollywood, CA 90038, USA.

BEECHER - "Resention is a Big Word in a Small Town" CD/ 27:49.
This CD blasts and grinds its way through seven intense tracks of throaty sub-metallic hardcore. BEECHER embrace technology, melodies and energy - these pulse rapidly alongside screaming vocals in a BOTCH stylee. It's damn impressive and sways between full-on epic rock like the current Brit breed (HUNDRED REASONS for example or darker stuff) and at other times full-on hardcore heroics like CONVERGE. Between and within songs are perfectly spaced lulls and technological quirks that make this Manchester band truly special. What a treat for UK hardcore. *(HE)*
IN AT THE DEEP END / www.inatthedeependrecords.co.uk

BELDONS - "Fatal Road" CD-R/ 14:07.
Well executed pop punk, along the same lines as the QUEERS. This style had gotten real stale after the overkill of the mid-90's. But seeing as the new *"in"* is emo rock and every band seems to be playing that at varying degrees of proficiency, this is actually a breath of fresh air. It's never gonna be anything new, all the hooks are familiar and the lyrics are kinda crappy, but what the heck, the sun's out, I've got a beer on the go... this'll do just fine. *(DS)*
MUTANT POP, 5010 NW Shasta, Corvallis, OR 97330, USA.

BETWEEN US - Self Titled 7".
I like the front cover, it's the outside of a wooden building (probably a house or a barn or something), painted white where parts of it is peeling off. With just the name of the band on it, it is very effective. But inside you get 4 fast and furious tracks of manic hardcore. Just think of DS13, ETA etc and I'm sure you'll be on the right path. Add to this sing a longs and infectious guitar licks, with a raw thrash-core vibe and it's all over before you even get time to scratch your arse. It has me dribbling all over it. God knows what it'll do to you. *(MH)*
BRIDGE, BOX 1903, 58118 Linkoping, Sweden.

BIG D AND THE KID'S TABLE - "The Gipsy Hill LP" CD/ 29:37.
This CD (an LP in sheep's clothing) is testament to the good time BIG D evidently had on their last visit to Europe. It begins with let me guess… Ben from THE 'TONE saying "I'm from Gipsy Hill, I dunno what you're talkin' abaat!" before launching into the a ten ton power-packed ska-punk melody. The disc is littered with references to Camden Town, Paris, Rome and the covers shows a guy flyposting in France. A few drunken party conversations appear between some of the blinding songs like "Those Kids Suck" and "Apologies". BIG D are best when they are pissed off and playing faster than thou hardcore punk. Sometimes they're a bit twee when they're not ("Evil girl/Angry Girl"). So although this isn't as automatic as the songs on their split with FIVE KNUCKLE there are still several brass-laden corkers among the punk rock celebrity appearances. *(HE)*
HOUSEHOLD NAME, PO Box 12286, London, SW9 6FE, UK.

BIONIC - Self Titled LP.
I have to admit, I only really kept this because the vinyl is so FUCKING THICK that even if we went into our overdraft I could not afford to send it to anyone else!!! Heh. But coupled with the fact that it's on some sweet as you like blue / white splashed wax and suddenly I'm pretty glad I kept it anyway. Musically, well BIONIC are Canadian and are on Boss Tuneage. Now it doesn't take a kid with a high IQ to get a rough idea of what they're buying into when they

pick this up! Yep, it's rock music in the vein of BIG DRILL CAR, DOUGHBOYS (this band is ex!) and even POCKET GENIUS but mixed with an almost NIRVANA twist and, at times, almost garagey vocals... Sounds weird but it works well and what you're left with is a cleverly rocking and meaty slab of vinyl. I think only 300 of these got pressed, so snap it up quick or you'll just be jealous of me in years to come! *(MD)*
BOSS TUNEAGE, PO Box 74, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2WB, UK.

BITCHIN' - "The Night Life, The Tight Style" CD/ 30:30.
Two gal, one guy combo pumping out distinct melodic numbers - choppy, shouty, melodic economic bursts. Had me thinking back at times to UK acts like HOOTON 3 CAR, BROCOLLI, and the ilk, intertwined with Excene Cervenka's short-lived mid-Nineties outfit AUNTIE CHRIST. Both gals, Caroline and Samantha, split the vocal duties with their respective bass and guitar duties. Todd drums. The lyrics are mostly about being your own person, staying strong, and believing in yourself, but not in that insincere tough-guy Hardcore way. Two tracks that I liked a lot were "I'd Rather Jump", slamming religious preaching - "Your ideas are better than your actions. Tell me: what's the big attraction to your elitist faction?" - and driving-the-point-home "Puppets and Politicians" - "survival of the fittest, not survival of the richest!" - a song chock full of sentiments I readily identify with. As I can the pro-environmental closer "Smokestacks" - "who voted for death in this democracy?" - a sharp stab at Dubya's Governments rejection of the Kyoto international framework to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, in an attempt to mitigate global climate change. Selfish fuckers. Smart band. *(PC)*
NO IDEA, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, USA.

BLOOD OR WHISKEY - Self Titled CD/ 39.46.
Straight out of Ireland, so they play diddly-dee folk, coupled with punk. Excellent quality and if you like the POGUES, then you'll love this. At least these guys are from Ireland, sure to be sure. That's for sure. *(MH)*
EIRE RECORDS, mero32@eircom.net

BLOODIED BACTERIA / SWARRRM - split CD/ 19:50.
Jesus, this is a fucking harsh record. Starting with a classical piano intro. Japan's SWARRRM proceed to beat and scare the living shit out of you as their tight as fuck barrage of blasts, chaotic guitars and evil/desperate vocals give you no room to hide! Imagine HARD TO SWALLOW jamming with PIG DESTROYER or something (?!) These guys are fucking relentless. BLOODIED BACTERIA play a kind of death / hardcore / crust sound and are equally as insane as SWARRM! I think I prefer these Germans, don't ask me why, probably 'cos I think the singer's voices are better or summat. He even sounds like John Tardy from OBITUARY now and again. A great fucking split for all those who like their chaos with no holds barred whatsoever. *(JD)*
MCR, 157 Kamiagu Maizuru, Kyoto 624-0913, Japan.
www.dance.ne.jp/-mcr/

BLOODLET - "Three Nights In the Cypress Trees" CD/ 42:03.
Back when Florida's BLOODLET released "The Seraphim Fall" I remember reading such high accolades being given to them as being the only successors to NEUROSIS' mighty throne. Now, I never heard the aforementioned album but if this new release is anything to go buy then I'm far from convinced that this is the case. Even with Steve Albini's engineering/mixing skills this is just good metal / noise core in my eyes. There's a lot more ingenuity and song writing skills compared to your average tough guy / beatdown chugga-chugga band but to be compared to NEUROSIS is just plain wrong. BLOODLET have obviously learned a few lessons from the likes of UNSANE and HELMET, which is fair enough but at first listen to opener 'Learn to Fly: Ascent' I just couldn't help thinking of the whining vocal style of the LOST PROPHETS or someone! I also can't help being severely put off by the vocalist's style of shouting generally; maybe he's just got the kind of vocal chords that don't work for me. Track six has a semi-spoken vocal line which also bears more than a passing resemblance to the psycho-babble of Neil Fallon on CLUTCH's classic debut "Transnational Speedway League". I can't say that this is devoid of *any* thing good or original as some of the chaotic riffing and nicely tight drums *do* tell of a band of class and dedication to themselves. I was just expecting so much more. *(JD)*
VICTORY, 346 N. Justine, Suite #504 Chicago, IL 60607, USA.

BODA / ETERNA INOCENCIA - split CD/ 36:48.
Here's a pretty cool split between France's BODA and Buenos Aires' ETERNA INOCENCIA (does this mean Innocence Eternal perhaps?). BODA kick things off with an initially fast melodic hardcore approach complete with fast drumming, sung melodies and chunky guitars. As their songs go on they reveal a more emo and metal side with some full-on screaming and a galloping riff in track four that would have any IRON MAIDEN fan salivating! ETERNA INOCENCIA carry on proceedings with a more melodic sound with some really cool singing in their mother tongue and just as much passion. This is a really cool split with a strong political agenda in both bands lyrics... and stuff. Cool! *(JD)*
VIENS FAIRE ONE TOUR, Lionel Cloaric. 1 Rue Jack Kerouac, 29200 Brest, France.

BOLLO - Self Titled LP.
Breezy, instrumental math rock type stuff from Germany's BOLLO. The ten tracks on here are beautifully crafted, laid back and generally a soothing alternative to DIANOGAH. This is their debut and it's really strong stuff. *(HE)*
MILLIPEDE / www.millipederecords.de.

BORN FROM PAIN - "Reclaiming The Crown" CD/ 40:23.
Europe's kings of unadulterated HATEBREED style mosh follow up the "Immortality" MCD with this album, and it weighs in heavier than twenty elephants balancing on your testicles. Bitter and bludgeoning, with a crisp production and a thick guitar sound. If tough, intimidating NY styled hardcore is your thing then definitely give these guys a listen. And their current line-up features Karl ex-CANVAS, once interviewed in these very pages! *(SM)*
GANGSTYLE, Ecrevissestraat 41, 6125, AW, Obbicht, The Netherlands.

BOXED-IN - Self Titled 7".
"Boxed In: crammed in to the back of a truck dying of suffocation, being persecuted for seeking asylum, the fear and stereotypes that the media builds - another box to put you in". That's how the band describe the endless possible meanings of their name and I guess that's how their raging hardcore sound would make many a person feel when listening to this seven inch. Their eight tracks (none going past the 1min, 35 sec mark!) of political and pissed off hardcore makes me want to kick my stereo in and go molotov a Mcdonalds! Ok, really though, this is great with non-stop drums and frenetic riffing aswell as a (totally) British sounding vocalist you can't go wrong. *(JD)*
CRIME SCENE, Box 13, 82 Colston Street, Bristol, BS1 5BB, UK.

BRACKET - "Live In A Dive" CD/ 50:53.
The latest in the Fat Wreck "Live In A Dive" series sees punk rock's answer to the BEATLES showing us what they can pull off live. I used to hate BRACKET because while I thought it was really interesting when they put all these cool harmonies in their songs, it pissed me off because somehow each supposedly weird and original bit always seemed to come off sounding the same, like they only knew one weird harmony and that was pretty much all they could do…but after hearing this I think I'm going to have to revise my opinions because this shit rocks! 17 cool songs here with the odd bit of chatting and obligatory sound of screaming fans. A good album, and produced so well you can barely tell it is live at all…don't know if that's a good thing or a bad thing but that's how it seems to my ears. Basically, it's a no brainer, if you like BRACKET and want to hear them live then buy it, but if you don't like BRACKET and think their albums sucked then listen to this on a rainy night in Cardiff while eating a microwave curry meal and reading issue #229 of MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL and maybe, like with me, it might totally change your mind about them and make you wonder what your fucking problem was and where you can buy some of their studio stuff from! *(DM)*
FAT WRECK CHORDS.

BRAND NEW / SAFETY IN NUMBERS - Split CDEP/ 13:07.
Cute split EP from two bands playing a new song each and a cover each. Both play catchy pop-punk with a hint of emo to varying degrees. BRAND NEW, from New York state, offer a catchy, WEEZER like bubble gum pop song "Moshi Moshi" and cover LOVE SPLIT LOVE. SAFETY IN NUMBERS are a HOT ROD CIRCUIT side project and play a slightly harder-edged pop song, "No Use", and cover JOURNEY. Both good bands. *(HE)*
TRIPLE CROWN, 331 West 57th St, #472 New York, NY 10019, USA.

BREZHNEV - "www.bullshit/control" CD/ 30:15.
One of the greatest live bands in the world return with the follow up to the classic "North America Sucks". This Canadian fronted band from the Netherlands jump straight in with an equally awesome but angrier album than the last one, sounding like what can only be described as a much more hardcore version of DOA. Great, interesting off-kilter political, personal and just plain funny lyrics from Dogshit growl against the stupidity of twenty-first century life and with the speeding heavy melodies of the rest of the band backing him up brilliantly this is all in all one hell of a punk rock album! This album is available in the UK for £7.50ppd from Paul Jellybrain at 4 Clarence Street, Nuneaon, Warks, CV11 5PT (e-mail: PAULF126@aol.com) if you don't find it in the shops. *(DM)*
D-FENS, PMB 275, 8 Amlajack Blvd, Newnan, GA 30265, USA.

BRIGHT CALM BLUE - "Asymmetry Set" CD / 50.04.
I fear this is a sick Joke on Dave`s part. I am known not to be an "emo" fan as such but this seems to have appeared in my pile to review. Hmmm. Don`t really know what to say, I guess this is pretty good for what it is and I`ve seen countless other emo bands in leeds/bradford play this stuff worse than this but it still does`nt grab me. You`ve got the intricate guitar noodling, the clever drummer who goes round the houses and the all essential singer in pain either whispering or screaming over the whole affair. The problem is when they want to do their little "tantrum" bit they forget to crank their instruments up, and it just sounds lame. I just keep thinking of BOB TILTON. They definitely have better lyrics than most bands of this ilk I`ll give them that but they`re written in that cryptic emo language where it could mean a million things to a million people or nothing at all to this reviewer. Oh yeah they have some keyboards and other electronic gadgetry on here to, but more for background effect than anything else, except for on `a tongue to taste` where they`re plain annoying. As for their name, I mean what is it with these type of bands. Do they have competitions to see who can come up with the most pointless name? Basically it`s like this, there`s eight songs on here and I made it through the 1st four. I could bear no more than that. The best thing I found on here was the quote they take from *Henry Miller`s* - Tropic of Cancer. If you like charity shop clothes have a spock haircut and are vexed with the world you`ll be alright with this. *(FU)*
DIVOT, PO Box 14061, Chicago, IL 60614, USA.

BUSINESS, THE - "Welcome To The Real World" CD/ 50:09.
Even though I'd heard most of these songs before on a *"Best Of"* CD, this is one BUSINESS album that I never picked up. It doesn't say, but it must have been released around '88 / '89... there's a song called "Ten Years" so that's gotta be about right. There's some real gems on here that I'd not heard, it's a bit rockier than the previous album "Saturday's Heroes", but that may be due to the original guitarist Steve Kent returning to the fold on second guitar. The song quality is a little hit and miss, from the classics like "Look at him now" and "Mouth & Trousers" to the dated, and frankly quite embarrassing, "Handball", but over the course of the album the good outweighs the bad and it's a rollicking good listen. Micky Fitz's vocals on "No Emotions" are pretty fucking rock man! Comes as a digi-pack with poster, 4 bonus cuts, and is a nice re-issue to grab a hold of. As a BUSINESS fan, it's been a good year so far, just need to see them live now. *(DS)*
CAPTAIN Oi!, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, HP10 8ZA, UK.

BUZZING BEES, THE - Self Titled 7".
Two really nice songs here from a band who's name would suggest their songs would be too nice, in one of those horribly twee cutesy indie-pop ways. And although THE BUZZING BEES do have a healthy dose of indie melody in their sound, it's embedded in rock, which is of course a good thing. The superbly titled "One Foot in the Grave, The Other in Your Mouth" is for the whole a twinkling indie-rock amble, with clean picked guitars and steady rhythm that only breaks out into power-chord rock for the middle-eight. It works good - smooth and good. On the flip, the equally well-titled "Brett Gunther Wouldn't Harm a Fly Because He'd Rather Harm You" is way more upbeat; a great bouncy indie-rock song that brings to mind a more controlled CAP'N JAZZ or early BRAID - the vocals have that same veering-off-key-for-the-high-notes thing which really endears me to it. It just works. This single actually reminds me quite a bit of a band called THE FALLING who also surprised me with a deceptively good 7"

a few issues back, but that's so obscure that you're welcome to ignore it. Clear-yellow pissy-coloured vinyl too - what more could you want? Nice! *(RR)*
THE BURNING SEASON, PO Box 382, Banff AB, T1L 1A5, Canada.

BUZZKILL / ADAM JOHN KILLIP & THE RUSTY STRINGBREAKERS - Split 7".
I bet Dave is going to shorten that title somehow to satisfy his obsessive urges to have record titles all on one line so I'll be sure to give THE STRINGBREAKERS their full title elsewhere in this review. But I digress, and why do that when BUZZKILL is first up to deliver the goods - and that's just what they do with the excellent opener "Dog on a Leash". If the likes of the SUPERSUCKERS, ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT and that whole jet-fuelled wild-eyed rock 'n' roll sound is your thing, then BUZZKILL are ready in the wings to deliver it. Next up is their cover of THE STRINGBREAKER's "80% Proof" which lurches along and (as all good covers should) manages to sound totally different to the original version served up on the flipside. Talking of which, ADAM JOHN KILLIP & THE RUSTY STRING BREAKERS kick off their side with their original version of said song and it sounds equally good as BUZZKILL's cover but in a totally different way. This is western rock 'n' roll cowboy music, a drawl to the vocals and a proper fast-plucked guitar sound that plunders the knees-up sawdust-floor bar-room action with ease. It makes me want to drink bourbon and chew tobacco. They then turn "Dog on a Leash" into a melancholic country ballad and it works surprisingly well! If only more split records had the entwined "compare and contrast" nature of this great release! *(RR)*
BLIND BEAR, PO Box 309, Leeds, LS2 7AH, UK.

CADILLAC BLINDSIDE - "These Liquid Lungs" CD/ 38:16.
I have to say, I think this band could be huge after this record. I'm sure the last time I heard them they had more of an AT THE DRIVE-IN feel to them than this current display of poppy, hook laden rock. In fact, this sounds like it's on Vagrant. It's like a punchier, less glossy HOT ROD CIRCUIT, complete with some really good harmonies and a pretty clean guitar sound. I think they have made a real "executive decision" in putting 'Weilders of The Poison Pen' first because it's definitely the instant hit, and any major label A+R guy putting that in his CD playing is gonna see something very palatable indeed. It's like... it's good, there's no denying that, it's just it feels like the onslaught of bands like this is just never-ending! Christ, I need to hear a new PEGBOY record! *(MD)*
FUELED BY RAMEN, PO Box 12563, Gainesville, FL 32604, USA.

CAMBER - "Wake Up and Be Happy" CD/ 43:18.
CAMBER are one of Deep Elm's bands that I imagine have never quite fit into the public image of Deep Elm's roster. Along with the likes of TRIPLE FAST ACTION (still sadly missed in this household), WALT MINK, MUCKAFURGASON, DAVID SINGER and a few others, they've been the square peg in emo-rock's round hole, if that's not a too schlocky an analogy for you. Across the course of their previous two albums, they've played music that's been intelligent without ever losing it's rock-out lure, and innovative without forgoing their instant appeal. "Wake Up and Be Happy" continues this excellent tradition with opener "Devil You Know" really setting the pace. The vocals have a distinct Jason Farrell edge to them, the drums have a neat reverbed veneer and there's a guitar hook in the verse that owes more to a casiotone than a power-chord. This is rock music that's learned from it's peers and then re-educated itself with a bunch of stuff that's not found in the mainstream. Tracks like "Expat" and "Lenny" are excellent head-down rockers with a few nods toward the likes of ARCHERS OF LOAF and VELO DELUXE, and others like "Darling Daughter" and "Make Yourself Comfortable" are the sort of friends that are giving terms like melancholic pop-hooks a good name again. Pianos too, and everyone knows my feelings on "pianos in rock". Bring it on. *(RR)*
DEEP ELM.

CAUSTIC CHRIST - Self Titled 7".
Another incredible 7" that I already had bought a copy of and have played religiously since I got it, even taped it for people because I love it so much. 6 songs of unadulterated hardcore, from the ashes of AUS ROTTEN, to name a few, ready to take on those who listen to it. Taking the energy and speed of POISON IDEA, couple with Scando crust and Japanese thrash make this an incredible record. Lyrics deal with the struggle of everyday life, something I'm sure we'll all identify with. What do you mean you haven't got this, get off your ass now. I'm sure plenty of UK distros will be selling it, if not then write to Havoc. *(MH)*
HAVOC, PO BOX 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408, USA.

CHAMPION - "Count Our Numbers" CD/ 21:36.
A neat little EP from the band who never need to make t-shirts 'cos their fanbase has a wardrobe full of Champion-wear anyway. This is ballsy youth-crew thick with straightedge pride and re-affirmation of all things hardcore, somewhere between the sounds of WHAT FEEDS THE FIRE and TEN YARD FIGHT. I think the problem with a lot of bands that follow this formula is that they forget to really bring it to life and prove it's not a sound that died in '88. CHAMPION are bursting with energy, attitude and focus and that makes all the difference. Not to mention the fact that they cover one of the best songs ever, ALONE IN A CROWD's 'Is Anybody There?'. Our next mission is to get CHAMPION over here, put them on next to all those awful two-chord "beatdown hardcore" bands and see who shines. *(SM)*
BRIDGE NINE, PO Box 990052, Boston, MA 02199-0052, USA.

CHE CHAPTER 127 - "Profit Prophet" CD/ 41:00.
This CD has 9 songs of all out rockish punky hardcore. The thing that hits me most is Meegan's vocals, they remind me of the FUN PEOPLE, despite the latter's vocalist being male. All 9 songs are medium paced, layered and well structured. It's of the highest order and awesome. Real political, well where do you think the name comes from? The package is well cool, recycled paper, no plastic box, colourful gatefold sleeve and a snazzy booklet. You couldn't ask for more. *(MH)*
G7 WELCOMING COMMITTEE.

CHERRY VALENCE, THE - "Riffin" CD/ 33:42.
Goddamn, hair shakin', cheeba suckin', Marshall smokin' R.O.C.K. ACTION from THE CHERRY VALENCE, that my compadre Peter (of Brighton Hardcore vets M.T.A.) would totally "Get Wild Tonight" about. See, he's a huge LYNYRD SYKNRD fan, and in an attempt at some enlightenment (on my part) did me a tape a few months back of their music... and whilst I can appreciate certain moves and riffs, most of what they were about does not move me, much. Too laid back, too drawn out, too just not my shit. Well CHERRY VALENCE draw their "Riffin" from the same mould, it's rooted deep in the bell-bottom swinging boogie Stoned wash denim age of the early '70's, totally fuckn retro and mostly not doing it for me. *(PC)*
ESTRUS, PO Box 2125, Bellingham, WA 98227, USA.

CHINKEES, THE - "Searching For A Brighter Future" CD/ 33:10.
Ska-tastic new offering from Asian Man owner Mike Park's band here. Cool, groovy tunes paired with an overall message of peace makes this release just entirely uplifting and calming, and it's exactly the tonic to the anger that you feel after reading some of the appalling racist abuse inside that Mike has received over the years simply for doing his thing and speaking his mind. Somehow it just makes the music more inspiring when you consider that even in the face of such bullshit these guys can still be so positive and unphased. A nice release that's good to listen to when you wake up on a day you really can't be fucked to deal with. After a few minutes you'll feel alright again and be ready to face the day. *(DM)*
ASIAN MAN.

CHRISTIANSEN - "Forensics Brothers and Sisters" CD/ 26:13.
I believe what happens with some bands, is that they try so hard to be original that they eventually end up sounding like all the other bands that try so hard. This kicks off with a definite FUGAZI feel and then experiments with a myriad of styles that just bring other bands to mind... I could list these bands but that would probably be construed as a reviewers cop-out, but I can't sit comfortably, writing lines of descriptive text when terms like BURNING AIRLINES and AT THE DRIVE-IN make it so much easier! The execution is faultless, the ideas are ambitious and this is a strong release on a very prominent label... how can they fail? Well, maybe people have had enough of this sound for now, anyways, we got HUNDRED REASONS over in the UK and I have to say I like them a lot more than this. Not bad by any means, I just find it a little irritating. *(DS)*
REVELATION, PO Box 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615 - 5232, USA.

CIRIL - Self Titled CD/ 37:08.
I've always wanted to hear this band and really glad to get this CD. I'll tell you, they are the bees knees. A mixture of styles and speed, fill up this CD, along with a mixture of emotions. Some really spazzed out thrashers, standing shoulder to shoulder with more mellower and abrasive CURE type cruisers. There's a CHRISTIAN DEATH cover, which means nothing to me as I've never actually heard that band. Really neato cover, along with a booklet full of drawings and complementary lyrics. Really glad I got the chance to review it as I'll be playing it for many moons to come. *(MH)*
NO LABEL OR ADDRESS.

COHEED AND CAMBRIA - "The Second Stage Turbine Blade" CD/ 55:33.
COHEED AND CAMBRIA are not for everyone - their songs are the wrong side of five minutes and the vocals are how can I say... juvenile? Fellow reviewer DS has sat here with regular disparaging comments, but there's a certain appeal to C&C's JIMMY EAT WORLD eatings grits kind of appeal. It's hardcore of the emotional type, with despairing lyrics and a hard rock undercurrent, like THE MOVIELIFE without the pop. Lots of people will like this too. *(HE)*
DEFIANCE, Ritterstrasse 52, 50668 Koln, Germany.

COMBATWOUNDEDVETERAN - "Duck Down For The Torso" CD/ 21:35.
Wow. This is totally different from what I was expecting. I thought I was in for some ropey, badly recorded thrash, like ASSHOLE PARADE or something. But this is totally different. Jagged and jerky, with stabbing guitars, desolate and desperate shrieked/yelled vocals, and plenty of evidence to suggest that COMBATWOUNDEDVETERAN can actually play their instruments. It's like ISIS for people with short attention spans. That same repetition and looped rhythms, churning, throbbing bass-lines, but then, just for the sheer glory of it, a big blast section with frenzied drumming, frantic guitars and vocals struggling to keep up. Like MUDHONEY struggling to cover BRUTAL TRUTH songs. Or something. *(SM)*
NO IDEA, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, USA.

COMMERCIALS, THE - "Twenty Years Tonight" CD/ 44:28.
Ten tracks of slick melodic rock from three clean-cut guys and a drummer that looks like he should be in a beatdown hardcore band. Combine all the elements of bands like SAVES THE DAY, GET UP KIDS, THURSDAY and all those others (that you can probably bring to mind faster than I can) and deliver it in a sound that's tight, passionate and really quite infectious and there you have THE COMMERCIALS. But here's the rub; I can take or leave this CD, not because it's uninspiring or bland, but just because I could pull another 30 discs off the shelf that sound equally as good. It's called "reviewers melodic rock fatigue". Here's the second rub; if I was in their hometown of Mechanicsville, Pennsylvania (and believe me, I would love to go to a town called that!) and was boozed-up on gallons of American beer, I would probably love to see THE COMMERCIALS playing live to an enthusiastic crowd in a bowling alley. It would be more than enough to shake off my fatigue. And here's the third rub (call it the massage by now if you like); sitting here right now I actually like this CD a lot, but I just don't know how often it's going to beat those other 30 good discs of it's genre. *(RR)*
JUMPSTART, PO Box 10296, State College, PA 16805, USA.

CONVICTION - "Kill It" CD/ 74:01.
Pretty epic CD here. CONVICTION is a sXe band and is a mixture of JUDGE and EARTH CRISIS for want of a description. Pretty metallic, but having more to do with the former than the latter. No lyrics or anything, but the artwork is cool. *(MH)*
THORP, PO BOX 2007, Upper Darby, PA 19082, USA.

COPPERPOT JOURNALS, THE - "Plotting to Kill Your Friends" CD/ 37:44.
Seems to have been an eternity since their first record came out so it's nice to see a new COPPERPOTS record finally see the light of the day and I have to be blunt, I initially thought it was all in vain as "Boxing Champion Parts 1 & 2" thumped from the speakers. Whatever expectant spark I had was cruelly pissed on by a bass-heavy emo-metal riff, screamed vocal line, and the mire only deepened as it slouched into a stabbing thud metal section. And then, when all seemed lost, like the sun breaking from behind a thundercloud, came the chorus and it alleviated all that preceded it. This is the COPPERPOTS I was wanting - melodic rock music that's loaded with emotion and confident vocals that could ease any broken heart. The second half of the song (let's call it "Part 2" just for the hell of it) did even more to alleviate my initial distaste, as the song eased out into a smooth indie-rock outro. And fortunately (for

me at least) the rest of the disc followed suit with the emotional and innovative rock taking the lead, and tracks like "I Lie All the Time" with it's contrasting staccato rhythms and clean guitar twinkles, or the infectious chorus of "Swimming Comparisons" more than make up for the duff start. It would be easy to lazily lump THE COPPERPOT JOURNALS in the emo-rock pigeonhole (and no doubt many will), but this is actually just well-built rock music that's layered with melody and passion. *(RR)*
FIREFLY, PO Box 30179, London, E17 5FE, UK.

COUNT ME OUT - "Permanent" CD/ 20:11
The Indecision version of this was reviewed last issue. This is what MM said : This is COUNT ME OUT's second full length on Indecision. On first listen I hated this. I wanted '110' again. Compared to their previous album '110' which was pure CHAIN OF STRENGTH, the guitars are clearer, with less distortion, the songs are more varied and the vocals are filled with desperation. But as I've played this over and over I've come to the conclusion that this is much better. Their sound is more a combination of CHAIN OF STRENGTH with the originality of BANE and the passion and hardness of CARRY ON. The Indecision blurb says COUNT ME OUT "will make a believer out of even the most jaded and cynical". This is straight edge hardcore at it's very, very best. Without a doubt my favourite album of the year. *(MM)*
REFLECTIONS, Spoorwegstraat 117, 6828 Arhem, The Netherlands.

CROSSTIDE - "Seventeen Nautical Miles" CD/ 47:12.
It's over a minute and a half before the vocals kick in on this laid-back long-player. CROSSTIDE make no excuses for being emotionally strung, despairing, romantic, guitar gazers. It would be hard to pretend they weren't emo let's just say. Far more determined and meaty than their contribution to the split with OLT, the ten tracks still hold traces of ELLIOTT but that can't be all that bad. It soars, it glides! There are some great moments on guitar but the vocals and lyrics are still too open-hearted and dramatic for my tastes. *(HE)*
IGNITION, 1 Chandos Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2NY, UK.

CROSSWORD - "Rockstar for a Day" CD/ 18:14.
Before you jump to conclusions, the title isn't autobiographically based - the lyrics to the song deal with the fleeting and transient nature of "rockstardom" that so many bands seem to aspire to these days. Sign your band away for a day of fame. Or fifteen minutes if you believed Warhol. Anyway, before I wander any further from the subject in hand, CROSSWORD play music that's got a lot in common with their labelmates STANDSTILL. On the whole they're a little more melodic than said band, but this is still powerful and energetic hardcore that makes good use of a piano and samples when need be. And a track like "Helven" has so many dark undertones within it's ever-shifting sound that this goes way beyond any regular melodic hardcore band. Just four tracks, and each of them showing a different side of a good band, and one who should have a good future. *(RR)*
BCORE, PO Box 35221, 08080 Barcelona, Spain.

DAG NASTY - "Can I Say" CD/ 39:45.
So this is the remastered, re-issue from this seminal hardcore punk band from "back in the day". I have to say, on the part of Dischord, it was a *very* smart move by their marketing department to re-issue two classic albums at the same time as a new one was released - very clever boys, very clever! Anyway, a lot of people see this as the ultimate DAG NASTY record. It's definitely the most straight up, most hardcore record they ever did and includes a multitude of classics like 'Values Here', 'One to Two' and 'Under Your Influence' and these are songs that have to be heard if you're still a DAG virgin, but I also feel that Pete Cortner always got an unjustified bad rap though, and I think "Wig Out at Denko's" and "Field Day" should not be passed by without acknowledgement. But yeah, if you want straight up, legendary, important and timelessly classic DC hardcore "Can I Say" is a must have. Extra's on here (that weren't on the original) include a comedy song "My Dog's a Cat" and some live songs. They're not essential but a bonus for obsessives, I guess. *(MD)*
DISCHORD, 3819 Beecher Street, NW Washington, DC 20007, USA.

DAG NASTY - "Wig Out at Denko's" CD/ 42:32.
This is the other Dischord re-issue, this time seeing ol' boy Peter Cortner taking over on the vocal duties, and giving the whole style of the band a much mellower feel. Even so, you still know it's DAG NASTY. Some of this is more similar to "Can I Say" than die-hard Smalley fans would probably like to admit, but there's also a real 80's feel to this record as well - it's not something I can put my finger on, but it's like, just by listening to it, you can pretty much assume it was recorded in the mid - late '80's and, indeed, it was. Classics on here include 'Trying', 'The Godfather', 'Wig Out at Denko's' and 'Dag Nasty'. Another essential purchase for first timers seeking out "the old moves"... *(MD)*
DISCHORD, 3819 Beecher Street, NW Washington, DC 20007, USA.

DAG NASTY - "Minority of One" CD/ 35:12.
I really don't get the point of this. Why bother reforming a seminal old hardcore band, only to churn out an album that has much more in common with everything they've done since they split up, than anything they recorded when they still existed? Let's face facts, this is DOWN BY LAW through and through. Admittedly, it's good DOWN BY LAW, as in those first two albums of heartfelt melodic rock, rather than the avalanche of bad quasi-streetpunk that followed them, but "Can I Say" or even "Wigout at Denkos" it ain't. It has a few hints of their past greatness, Smalley even does a spoken middle-eight part in "Bottle This" - but when that whole line about "y'know, I walked past you on the street the other day... we used to this close...we used to be like brothers..." sounded bitter and stabbing, this new one just sounds tired and jaded. Even the production is lacking - the drums are weak and buried in the mix, and the guitars lack any incision. Fact is, if this was a new DOWN BY LAW album I'd be hailing it as a return to form, but as a new DAG NASTY album this is just a washout. Not a bad album per se, but for fuck's sake, let's keep the memories sacred, eh? "Can I Say"... now there was a record! *(RR)*
REVELATION.

DAGDA, THE - "Threefold" CD/ 40:13.
THE DAGDA's debut long-player is heralded by a deceptive and uneasy ambient beginning, but that's shattered within a couple of minutes as the opening chords of "Jahbulon" churn from the speakers and two things become immediately apparent; the production is spot-on, crisp and crushing (credit to the Warzone Centre for it too!) and this record is going to throttle your scrawny neck. C'mon, they're ex members of MY NAME IS SATAN, BLEEDING RECTUM and JOBBYKRUST so you should have expected the avalanche of metallic hardcore that "Threefold" brings down upon you. The aforementioned opener is a hell of a way to start a record too, over six minutes of searing riffs and throat-tearing vocals that bring to mind ISIS or a more 'epic' CATHARSIS. It's followed by "Draining" which picks up the pace and showcases some very fine metal touches courtesy of the BLEEDING RECTUM heritage. And from therein you're never let go until the monumental ten-minute closer "Atenoux" has rung it's last chord. So when you couple all this with some great lyrics presented in a very smart booklet, you've got yourself one very fucking good record. *(RR)*
ENSLAVED, PO Box 169, Bradford, W.Yorks., BD1 2UJ, UK.

DALEK - "From Filthy Tongue of Gods and Griots" CD/ 55:40.
DALEK's prior album on Gern Blandsten was stupendously uneventful and for the opening dirty loops and rhymes of this one I though maybe it was a (slight) improvement. But then it repeated, and again, and a-fucking-gain. Then there was an excruciating twelve minute dirge of noises and 'street' poetry and then back came the dreary hip-hop again and again. I don't care what the snobby highbrow critics say, this is bad hip-hop for art-school fashion flakes. Fifty fucking five minutes of it. I demand an hour of my pleasurable life back - 55 minutes for the sounds you inflicted and a 5 minute bonus for the trauma incurred. *(RR)*
IPECAC.

DAREDEVIL - "Tippin' The Scales Of Justice" CD/ 42:47.
The promo sheets that come with Gangstyle releases are a fucking joke. From start to finish they are an exercise in mainstream PR crossed with totally pointless scenester namedropping and 'trivia' information, and listing "selling points" such as "intensive advertising campaign during the next few months all over Europe, USA and Japan". Jeez! Aside from that, their CD's are usually pretty cool in that tough NY hardcore kinda way. DAREDEVIL stick to the East Coast formula, paying homage to the likes of ALL OUT WAR and COLD AS LIFE with enormous crushing riffs, in-your-face vocals and a very hard hitting delivery. The WIDE AWAKE cover is pretty cool but I'm really not into the EXTREME style ballad!! *(SM)*
GANGSTYLE, Ecrevissestraat 41, 6125, AW, Obbicht, The Netherlands

DAWN PARADE, THE - "Electric Fence Your Gentless" CD/ 16:42.
What's wrong with bands? At what point do they think wittering on their press-sheet about Peel/Lamacq, quoting reviews from The Guardian, boasting that they've been on "The Big Breakfast" and have had interest from Polydor is in any way going to endear me to them? Please understand, it makes me want to hate you before I have even endured your first chord. That said, the title track is quite pretty in a WANNADIES or MOJAVE 3 sort of way, with a sweet hooky chorus. The other two tracks are as throwaway as the press-sheet suggests though. Oh, there's also a "Single Edit" of the title track because like, I *really* needed it. Just because it's the song that might be your ticket to the big league is no excuse to include it twice. Trust me on that one. *(RR)*
SUGARTOWN, 9 Wheatfields, Thurston, Suffolk, IP31 3TE, UK.

DAY OF THE DEAD - Self Titled 7".
Wow, this is a damn imressive slab of vinyl. Taking their name from one of my favourite movies as a teenager (nowadays I much prefer "It's a Wonderful Life" - go figure!) DAY OF THE DEAD, from Portugal, crank out angry, pissed off straight edge hardcore that has some great anti-Nationalist / politcal lyrics sung over some tuneful, yet harsh almost youth crew hardcore punk music (without those trendy back-ups). I guess my only gripe is that I had to crank the volume up to 11 as the sound quality is a bit ropey on my version - nut I got 1 of the limited to just 100 red vinyl copies and, from my experience, coloured vinyl has always had a less decent sound quality than black, so maybe it's just that? Other than that though, this is great stuff from a country we don't hear enough music from. *(MD)*
GOODWILL, Dario Adamic, CP 15319, 00143 Roma Laurentino, Italy,

DAYLIGHT - "Vague Pictures Of Amazing Moments" CD/ 41:23.
When this vocalist shrieks, he sounds like the dude from ZAO, and I mean EXACTLY like him. But there is more to this CD than a passing nod to ZAO, as DAYLIGHT also have layers of CONVERGE, HIMSA, and more relaxed moments reminiscent of the UK'S own MEND THIS TEAR. I'd like to make a POISON THE WELL comparison too, but I've heard is their first MCD, and this kinda reminds me of that, with occasional (and very confident) melodic vocals. And the timing changes and structures totally keep you guessing as well. *(SM)*
INCENDIARY, Stockumer Str. 20, 47139, Duisburg, Germany.

DEAD AND GONE - "The Beautician" CD/ 28:34.
Exploding straight in and aiming for the jugular with 'Towers on Fire' California's DEAD AND GONE bring us 13 tracks of dirty, pissed off and twisted hardcore. Song two 'Leave The Dead to Bury the Dead' reminds me of a mixture between the brooding and sinister moments of early CLUTCH mixed with a more rock-y DEADGUY, that is before it goes off into a spacey and maniacal NEUROSIS meets 'KENNEDYS passage. Shane Baker's gravely vocals tell us all manner of twisted stories and grievances, "when you get to the bottom in a hotel room, Gideon's keeps you laughing, and it's all vanity, and dust is dust." The inclusion of some organ and synthesiser provides another level to their already varied sound and contributes to the unsettling and chaotic nature of the band. This is one of the best heavy, dirty hardcore records I've had the pleasure of in a long time! *(JD)*
GOLD STANDARD LABRATORIES, PO Box 178262, San Diego, CA 92177, USA.
www.goldstandardlabs.com

DEAD CELEBRITIES, THE - "Clean Up on Aisle 3" CD/ 39:23.
How many bands like this must be around these days? Pop-fuckin' punk! Arrrgghhh!!! Wah wah! "My baby just left me". I expected more from this band if the cover was anything to go by! But sadly it was not to be and a quick skim of the lyrics and a single play of this CD, which rarely threatened a break from the "Oh so safe" confirmed the worst to me. Yup! Bog standard, boring and part of the new MTV commercial punk generation crowd. *(GS)*
FAT FISH, PO Box 26953, St Louis, MO63118-9998, USA.

DEAD RED SEA - "Gone" 7".
A brace of decent indie-pop songs that heavily brings the NEW RISING SONS to mind. It has that same hint of an emo-rock band gone indie to it, which of course both bands are (or

were in the case of NEW RISING SONS). In the same way that a good few emo-rock bands are only a few paces away from mainstream rock, this sort of music is only a few paces from a lot of mainstream indie bands (whom I'll refrain from mentioning for fear of showing up my shocking ineptitude of actually defining one indie band from another). "Gone" is a downbeat pop song, slow-paced and sentimental, with the heartfelt vocals you'd expect from the old singer of CROSS MY HEART. Judging by these two tracks, this sort of mid-paced sound seems to be DRS's forte. Flipside track "Brightside" picks up the pace with that classic indie drumbeat and a few more pop hooks. Both rather fine, if not essential, tracks to while away a few minutes with. The artwork is dreary by the way, fortunately the music isn't. *(RR)*
IGNITION, 1 Chandos Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2NY, UK.

DEAD SERIOUS - "It's What You Can't See" CD/ 22:21.
Just think of YOUTH OF TODAY and CHAIN OF STRENGTH and you've got DEAD SERIOUS in a nutshell. They even do a cover of "Flame Still Burns", which is excellent. So it's pretty much generic youth crew styled hardcore, stabbed in the back lyrics to boot. But I don't care, as I love this and think DEAD SERIOUS are pretty good. Wish they'd speed up now and again, but C.O.S, etc played pretty much the same speed. You either like it or hate it, I'm the former. *(MH)*
THORP, PO Box 6786 Toledo, OH 43612, USA.

DEAD SERIOUS / DIEHARD YOUTH - Split CD/ 20:15.
Yeah, what Mel said about both of these bands on their own releases reviewed in this issue. This split is all about three X's, skulls, songs about staying young (I'm down with that!), uniting the scene, an angry hatred of child abuse and lots of other finger pointing posi-action. Any young kids picking this up should learn something here if they just sit down and read the lyrics... Musically, YOUTH OF TODAY is the obvious reference point here, so there's no point in listing any others, and they all ripped that band off originally anyway, haha... But yeah, funky looking packing for some pissed and posi straight edge. Neato! *(MD)*
THORP, PO Box 2007, Upper Darby, PA 19082, USA.

DEADBEAT RADICALS - "Little Yellow Mini" CDEP/ 16:07.
And what the fuck, pray tell, exactly is this mind numbing piece of electro-pop shit? Well as far as I can tell, it's one track done four times - "remixes" I think they're called. They're all as shit as the "real" version of this shittingly shit track. In fact, they're shitter. This is like an "Adam and Joe" sketch, but whereas they're supposed to be funny, I am pretty sure this is, god help us, supposed to be good. Well it's not, it's shit-tastically fucking rubbish. *(MD)*
BLUEFIRE, 4 Tower House, Tower Street, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 2HW, UK.

DEADLOCK - "The Arrival" CD/ 53:23.
I have a love / hate relationship with digipack packaging. When it is all squashed and bent and torn and the CD grippers are snapped away, it sucks, but when you get one that is so detailed, eyecatching and crisp as this DEADLOCK one, it does make you sit up and take notice. Which makes it even more of a pity that they've taken a hole-punch to it just to stop me reselling it after my review. Just like when Marks and fucking Spencer snips the labels out of its returned clothes before giving them to charity. Is this what hardcore has become? Honestly, what is the point? I mean, Fracture may not need the cash obtained from selling on post-review items to the local 2nd hand record shop. But for Johnny Pritt-Stick and his little cut n' paste zine, sat in his room with bits of paper spread out all over the fucking place, it can provide a much needed bit of cash when it comes to photocopying time. Zines need labels and labels need zines, so I think its just fucking spiteful (though there's probably a technical business-like term to justify it) to sabotage your own releases like this, yet still expect the likes of Johnny Pritt-Stick to take time out to listen to it and review it. Do me a favour, if you order anything from this label, take a fucking holepunch to your money just before you send it off. Oh, this sounds like UNDYING, they're all vegan, and there's a girlie on a couple of songs. I'd write more, but an incomplete release gets an incomplete review. *(SM)*
WINTER / www.winterrecordings.de

DEGRADATION - "Homeward Bound" CD.
Raging old school hardcore from Germany's DEGRADATION. I guess this is like a mix between the likes of JUDGE and even some Boston types like OUT COLD although I think there's a heady dose of NYHC in there too. This is fucking powerful hardcore and is played like they know what they're doing and mean it! Cool fucking Zorlac style artwork too! *(JD)*
COMPETITION, Darfelder Strasse 31, 48727, Germany.
www.competitionrecords.com

DENALI - Self Titled CD/ 44:36.
DENALI are like the PORTISHEAD of indie rock. Their name comes from the Apathascan title for America's highest mountain, Mount McKinley in Alaska, and gives an indication of their desolate, remote sound, also shown by song titles such as "Lose Me", "Prozac" and "Everybody Knows". Maura Davis's vocals so high and soft they're almost falsetto but as smooth and disturbing as beautiful can be. The music is atmospheric, quiet guitar rock and features members of ENGINE DOWN but doesn't sound much like them. Sadly I couldn't get my video part of the CD to work but that might appeal to those who fancy Maura. *(HE)*
JADE TREE, 2310 Kennwynn Road, Wilmington, DE 19810, USA.

DEVIATE - "Red Asunder" CD/ 66:06.
I wish this CD had Deviated to another reviewer (ha ha). This is bog standard mosh metal straight from the home of tough guy music itself NYC. It really is pretty unoriginal and then some. It reeks of generic from beginning to end. This lot are joined on several songs by two of BIOHAZARD, who I did`nt even know were still around. Loads of tough guy breakdowns and the whole thing is full of cheesy back-ups. The artwork is dreary and probably took two minutes to knock up. "Deviate" written in old english lettering over a red background. Some photo`s of the band in the dark with a light shining on one side of their face for that eerie effect (yawn) and the typical pic of them jumping in the air legs up by the neck. Luckiliy for me I got a "bonus" disc on which most of the meterial is culled from the "pre-production session" of such and such a recording. Is`nt that just a long winded way of saying it`s a "demo" version!? Christ I can`t get over how damn boring this is, if you like SICK OF IT ALL and what have you then maybe you`ll get something out of this but even then I doubt it. I`m sure you`ll be a hit with the kids on MTV. *(FU)*
I SCREAM / www.iscreamrecords.com

DIANOGAH - "Millions of Brazilians" CD/ 35:45.
It's the same experience every time I get a DIANOGAH CD and although this started well, it got seriously boring. I'll be crucified by the scene for this, but honestly two albums was quite fun, but there's only so much instrumental long-song "kookiness" I can handle. Sure Rachel Grimes makes an appearance, as does John McEntire, but as awesome as DIANOGAH are live, I won't be playing this much. Yawn. *(HE)*
SOUTHERN, PO Box 59, London, N22 1AR, UK.

DIEHARD YOUTH - "Without The Kids We Would Be Dead" CD/ 23:09.
With a name like that you'd hardly expect a crust band now, would you? Must be a pretty dedicated lot, but what about when they grow up - ha, ha. Probably not, young til I die - like myself. Again, more youth crew styled hardcore. Just think of IN MY EYES, TEN YARD FIGHT, FLOOR PUNCH. The vocals are very like Kevinsted - a pleasure for me. I love this style, never get bored with it. *(MH)*
THORP, PO Box 2007, Upper Darby, PA 19082, USA.

DIPNOI - "Torn" CDEP/ 9.44.
Fucking killer metal. Be it grind, thrash or whatever you'd call it - me being an ignorant punk. It reminds me of mid-period PANTERA, a little HELMET and their own style. *(MH)*
DIPNOI, CAIXA Postal 2313, 0160-970, Sao Paulo, SP. Brazil.

DIRT BIKE ANNIE - "Live Jersey City 2000" CD/ 34:31.
I'm new to DIRT BIKE ANNIE but they play catchy superfast pop punk with boy-girl vocals. This is a bootleg of a birthday bash where they played old and new songs with nearly no breaks in between! They sound raw, energetic and like they're having one hell of a good time. Sound quality is top and there are some nice moments of personality here (check out the Happy Birthday song!). *(HE)*
MUTANT POP, 5010 NW Shasta, Corvallis, OR 97330, USA.

DISCARGA - "Happy Night Electric Experience" CD/ 27:39.
Here it is then, the mighty DISCARGA CD. I had this on vinyl already but I`m chuffed to be able to review it. If you like straight up raw hardcore played fast as hell then this is a band for you. Add in a huge Latino feel and you know you can`t go wrong. You get 34 short blasts of pissed off and raw thrash on here. Next to none of the songs clock in over the 1-minute mark and none go over the 2-minute barrier. This is a "fast-core" cd after all. Loads of cover versions on here as well and they in themselves are a good indicator as to where they`re coming from. They do LARM, DOOM, RATOS DE PORAO and COLERA so if you know those bands you`ll be reaching for your sheckles already. As for the lyrics well unfortunately my translating skills are nil so I`m knackered on that front. This is actually a sort of discography of sorts with the new material at the start with the rest being culled from other releases going back to 1999. There`s some really great stuff on here and it flies by in no time. I really think the south American language is well suited to singing fast, it just sounds so pissed and full of energy. I love bands singing in their native language but I just wish I had translations being the typical monolingual brit. Listening to this just makes me want to smash things up and run around pretending I know the words whilst doing hardcore leaps. Brazilian thrash is on the up and these boys are leading the charge. *(FU)*
LAJA, CP 25519, Vila Vehla - ES, 29102-973, Brasil.

DOWN AND AWAY - "Who's Got The Deliverance?" CD/ 27:07.
All the way from Sweden this lot! Twelve songs of anti-war, anti-system stuff in a very RANCID, ANTI-HEROES style, which to these ears is a great style even if a lot of bands play this way these days! Great packaging for the CD as well and includes the use of a photo used on that great DEAD KENNEDYS single "Bleed For Me" as well as all the lyrics. *(GS)*
ROCKSTAR, Verbindungsstrasse 9, 52080 Aachen, Germany.

DOWN BY LAW - "Punkrockdays" CD/ 55:08.
19 track best of here from ex-DAG NASTY front man Dave Smalley's 90's punk band DOWN BY LAW. I mean, they're still around and all, but I lost interest in this lot a long time ago when they started putting out fifty track albums with, what I felt, was only a few stand out tracks on each one... Although a lot of people may actually find this really offensive, I really liked their "Blue" album that was, I think, their second full length. I picked it up from the long gone Forbidden Beat record stall here in Cardiff after hearing some tracks from it on an old 411 skateboard video. Unfortunately, only "Last Brigade" from that album is on here, but on the whole, as a best of, this record works pretty well. it chooses some of the better songs from all their Epitaph albums (so thankfully no ridiculous tin whistle ditties about Wales, Ireland and Scotland will be free, doh) and that, on the whole, makes it totally listenable to these jaded ears. The whole thing is topped off with some sentimental pieces of writing by Dave and Sam about all the gush that comes with being in DOWN BY LAW! Fans will have all these albums already, but I guess this is as good a place as any to start with if you fancy checking out a wide spectrum of DOWN BY LAW's songs in one go and have never heard them before. Pick it up while you're out shopping for DAG NASTY CD's. *(MD)*
EPITAPH.

ECHO IS YOUR LOVE - "8 Hours" CD/ 53:02.
Nothing much clicked on here for me. Starting off with an ethereal song with ghostly female vocals and nothing much else hardly set me off squealing down the road of delight. The next track picks up the pace somewhat and even introduces a couple of guitars for an eclectic alt-pop-noise thing but then it has this goddamned scraping wall-of-noise ending that unsurprisingly sees me reaching for the skip button on the CD deck. It's something like an odd cross between GODSPEED, KRAFTWERK and KUKL and for all it's innovation it's hardly attractive to the ears. I can take or leave this CD, which means I'll probably leave it. *(RR)*
HEEL TURN MEDIA, PO Box 291, Orpington, Kent, BR6 8LA, UK.

ECOLOGY OF BLUE / GREAT NORTHERN ELECTRIC - Split 7".
I'll state the facts as I think they exist: ECOLOGY OF BLUE is a collaborative effort of THE HOST SEPIA and NIMBUS CLOUD. They play electronic stuff that's dark and ominous sounding. People whisper and there's odd sounds. GREAT NORTHERN ELECTRICS is possibly from Australia and does a sort casio bontempi thing with noises. It's on purple vinyl. It's come with acetates. Beyond me. *(RR)*
SATELLITES & CLOUDS, 1 Nantes Close, London, SW18 1JL, UK.

ED GEIN - Self Titled CD/ 9:03.
This is more like it, some half decently played metal-core from the states. Three songs to get me teeth stuck into, and this is pretty cool stuff, full of technical riffs and a real overall heavy feel to it. This is a style of hardcore that has been done to death in the last few years but this lot still managed to keep me interested. I guess there`s a helping of the Relapse school of metal in here which is fine with me. Lyrically things ain`t great in the day-to-day lives of this lot. `Score one for team bitch` is about a recent relationship bust up and I think he`s still coming to terms with it. The insert is cool with a little statement saying how they just wanted to start a band and play and that they aren't to arsed about trends etc. thumbs up to that. If evil metal riffage and hardcore are your thing this is worth checking out. Shame there`s only three songs to go on but on the whole I like. *(FU)*
WRITE TO ED GEIN, 8 Slosson Road, West Monroe, NY 13167, U$A.

EIS - Self Titled CD/ 41:43.
EIS play some well written punk rock in the shape of a more throaty and angsty emo / post hardcore sound. Some interesting time changes and riffs but a slightly annoying vocal performance. This is cool an' all but I really don't have much else to say about it apart from that it doesn't do much for me and that the album design is rather naff. *(JD)*
SMALL BUDGET, BP 171 75563 Paris, Cedex 12, France.

EMBASSY, THE - "Anticipation" CD/ 33:29.
Don't know what it is about these guys but for some reason this release sounds... and feel free to revoke my license to punk here... too fast!! Not too fast in that it's blistering power violence, it's not, it's power pop punk. What I mean is, all the songs seem like they have been raced through at a pace a little too quick for them and so the finished product sounds kind of sloppy and messy. Sometimes a messy sound can be a good thing, but not here. It just sounds overall like it could have been done a lot better than it was and that what should have been good songs have not been realized to their full potential. It's sad because the liner notes imply the band waited five years to record this... it's just a shame that once in the studio they didn't wait a few hours more and get it right! *(DM)*
POPRIOT, PO Box 14985 Minneapolis, MN, 55414, USA.

EMBRACE - Self Titled CD/ 39:04.
Another Dischord reissue / remaster here, this time from seminal post MINOR THREAT, pre FUGAZI Washington, DC hardcore band EMBRACE from the mid-eighties. People say this band, along with RITES OF SPRING, were some of the first "emo" bands - but what does that actually mean? Hell, I loved FUGAZI from 'Song No. 1' onwards but never fucking heard them being refered to as "emo" until at least 2001! Which is obviously ridiculous. And like FUGAZI, EMBRACE are / were just a really genuine, talented hardcore punk band, if somewhat off-kilter. Some of this stuff even reminds me of DAG NASTY circa "Can I Say", just slowed down a bit. As great as this record is, and as important as it should be to have it in your collection, I think I always preferred FUGAZI's first single, Self Titled EP and "Margin Walker" EP, all of which really struck a chord with me back in '89 or so. Don't know what I'm on about? Pick up the "13 Songs" CD as well when you go buy this. *(MD)*
DISCHORD, 3819 Beecher Street, NW Washington, DC 20007, USA.

ENDA - "For the Only" CDEP/ 11:16.
I don't know why DS didn't pick this up - he's THE D'VINYLS biggest fan after all. No dirty lyrics though - shame. *(HE)*
SPRINGMAN, PO Box 2043, Cupertino, CA 95015-2043, USA.

ENON - "High Society" CD/ 41:32.
It's impossible to fault this CD. Almost every song is completely different but all fit together seamlessly, making a perfect eclectic and generally upbeat Touch and Go indie rock record. The history of band members undoubtedly has something to do with it since ENON began as the brainchild of BRAINIAC's John Schmersal, soon supported by Toko Yasuda, BLONDE REDHEAD's gifted female vocalist and Matt Schulz from LET'S CRASH. Occasionally Toko sings and adds new dimensions just when you're beginning to tire of John's indie vocals. All songs are backed up by a synth-laden indie guitar backtrack that ranges from haunting ("In the City") to lazy groove-inducing ("Leave it to Rust"). ENON sound like everyone and no-one and sit happily somewhere between THE DISMEMBERMENT PLAN, GIRLS AGAINST BOYS and BECK. Weird I know! But good weird. *(HE)*
TOUCH AND GO c/o Southern, PO Box 59, London N22 1AR, UK.

ESTUDANTES / EVIL IDOLS - Split CD/ 26:58.
Coupla way-acceptable Brazilian outfits here - ESTUDANTES are blessed with an early '80's anarchic SoCal snotty bent, real pissed and explosive... I swear I'd have been singing along to "Quero Morrer" if my Portuguese was existent. At least I stood a chance on their spitting take of the CJ's "Beverley Hills". EVIL IDOLS have adopted English for their songs, a wabble wousing thunderous assault, with a decided UK '82 Punk thump, real rough 'n ready numbers, and the title track is a corker. Must be plenty of these bands down in Brazil, as Brighton Punk luminary Pete TEST-TUBE (stop yer sniggering) was only regaling me the other night with stories of a recent trip he made to Sao Paolo, and the gig he did with a local band, and the wicked time that was had. Indeed, this is a cracking CD. *(PC)*
LAJA / laja@altavista.net

ETA - "We Are The Attack" 7".
8 tracks of stop start, run for your fucking lives, old school hardcore from Umea, Sweden. These guys are DS-13 affiliated, and that comes through, but I guess ETA are less brutal the DS-13 as they mix in a more punk rock sound on songs like 'Otto Hates The Police' (a DICKS cover) which has ETA coming across more early ADOLESCENTS, MISFITS, ANGRY SAMOANS and REAGAN YOUTH than any thrash attack these guys are renowned for. This cover tops off an already fucking killer 7". Hunt this well packaged baby down for sure. *(MD)*
DERANGED, www.epilepticterrorattack.com

FACE TO FACE - "Everything is Everything" CD/ 75:40.
24 tracks charting 'the hits' of FACE TO FACE fom day one up until just before their latest album. And I have to say, I always liked FACE TO FACE and this is a really good compilation to have. It even has the 'better' tracks from that really bad "shit" album they did, and they sound okay too. Not much more to say really, you know already if you need this as FACE TO FACE were one of those early - mid ninties seminal poppy punk rock bands that definitely had the ability to crank out a good fucking tune. How much further they can take it, I really don't know, but like PENNYWISE they still seem to put out records that your average wannabe would kill to be able to do so... I guess it's just a matter of what's "En Vogue" in 2002, and maybe FACE TO FACE missed the boat already? And I still think they're fools for leaving Fat Wreck Chords... oh, this is a double CD, it comes with that "First 7 Years" film on a DVD and all I can say is that Trevor Keith comes across as as much of a bellend as I remember him being when I saw the video first time around! I don't know what it is man, but he's a little bit creepy, a little bit insincere... you know what I'm saying. Heh. *(MD)*
KUNG FU, PO Box 38009, Hollywood, CA 90038, USA.

FACE TO FACE - "How To Ruin Everything" CD/ 46:07.
So what exactly can you say about a band that has put out the same album for the last eight years! Heh, it's not that bad, I mean PENNYWISE get away with it, and I'd say FACE TO FACE do as well. In fact, this is a good record. I think the last one was a bit better, as was their first major label album with that fat dude in the mirror on the cover. They both had a rawer edge to them, and better songs - but as a F2F album stands, this is a good piece of work. Sure, Trev and his session musicians missed the boat by like 6 fucking years (funny to see them in the "New Bands You Must Hear" section of Kerplunk! last week - well they did support ALKALINE TRIO and GREEN DAY in the UK recently, so they must be some hip, new, unheard of band that needs championing asap!) but the kid has paid his dues I guess, he's getting on now, wants some money before he kicks the bucket and all that.. I understand guys, I understand. I just think you're not 'emo' enough to make the top dollar in this game though, you know? Huh. Anyway... if you're a diehard FACE TO FACE fan, and (like me) ignore everything about them but their music, you'll be liking this. *(MD)*
VAGRANT.

FACE TOMORROW - "For Who You Are" CD/ 41:38.
This comes in a cardboard slipcase that goes over the regular jewel case. It has the same artwork as the inside so I really don't know why we needed to waste a couple more acres of trees to produce it, but hey, it makes it stand out on your shelf in amongst the other CDs. Question is of course, do you want it to stand out? Sure, why not, let's be +posi+ here for a moment since a few of my prior reviews have been totally -negi- and I could do with a lift. FACE TOMORROW released a pretty decent EP a while ago on Funtime and those four tracks are also on here, along with eight new ones and it actually all sounds really good. High quality, modern melodic rock, with a lot of emphasis on the rock, although plenty on the melody too. One thing's that's immediately apparent is that the singer can sing, like, properly, y'know. He's got a very rock voice that's either going to make or break your opinion of this band - imagine SAMIAM with a little AS FRIENDS RUST and a rock singer. Plenty of guitar chugs, plenty of introspective brooding middle eights and plenty of big chorus hooks. I think I gave their last CD away because it was just pretty good. I'll keep this one though. *(RR)*
REFLECTIONS, Spoorwegstraat 117, 6828 AP Arnhem, The Netherlands.

FATSO JETSON - "Cruel & Delicious" CD/ 42:36.
Let's get FATSO JETSON into context for the uninitiated; they're one of the original Palm Desert (Mojave) rock bands; they've toured with KYUSS and QOTSA; Brant Bjork (FU MANCHU's drummer until recently) used to play guitar for them; they've had albums out on SST and Custom Bong Load Records; "Cruel and Delicious" is released on Josh Homme's Rekords Rekords label. Pedigree? You bet your fucking Palm Springs retirement fund on it! Of course, what that pedigree doesn't necessarily entail is that FATSO JETSON sound like any of their Palm Desert peers - sure they have the guile of KYUSS, the occasional riffage of FU MANCHU and most predominately, the drug-addled out-freakage of QOTSA, but they also have this indefinable weirdness about them. Maybe add a little of SST's eclectic roster into their melting pot. What's not worth pontificating over is the fact that this is a great fucking record. From the spazz-turbo-rock of "Drinking Mode" through to their sunstroke tinged cover of DEVO's "Pig Hat Smokin'" and beyond to the mournful slide-guitars of "Stranglers' Blues", this is a record of shifting and mildly demented desert rock. Sure it's meant to be heard in a moonlit canyon powered by a diesel generator, but for the time being these speakers will have to suffice. *(RR)*
REKORDS / www.rekordsrekords.com

FIGHT FOR CHANGE - "More Than Drug Free" 7".
It always excites me to get anything on Commitment, so this new 7" by Portugal's FIGHT FOR CHANGE came as a welcome surprise on a very hot August afternoon. It has trade mark Commitment essentials such as excellent cover/layout, straightedge to the bone and awesome fast youth crew styled hardcore. Brilliant sound quality and a band who know how to play their instruments. 6 songs of pure posi-core, lots of singalongs and I'm sure violence free circle pits. If you already know the quality that Robert puts out, then you'll snap this up. If you are new to hardcore, take a chance with this puppy. *(MH)*
COMMITMENT, Klein Muiden 38, 1393 RL Nigtevecht, The Netherlands.

FIREMARK, THE - "The Way They Run" 7".
Members of Swedish mainstays OUTLAST and NINE playing fucking great raw melodies with the melodies crammed into their sharp sound. These four tracks totally bring old GET UP KIDS to mind, when the GET UP KIDS still had some punk rock bones in their bodies (think "Four Minute Mile" era) and played their songs like they loved them and wanted to beat the shit out of their guitars and throats. For the same reasons, THE FIREMARK also remind me of a more abrasive DUGONG - there's that same blend of mid-paced passionate rock with the caustic hooks. This Ep impressed me immensely on the first listen and repeated listens only serve to build on that initial appraisal - this is the shit. I think it's safe for me to say that we'll be hearing more from THE FIREMARK in the near future, and if I'm wrong about that then something will be very awry in the punk rock world. *(RR)*
BRIDGE, Box 1903, 58118 Linkoping, Sweden.

FIRST GRADE CRUSH - "Our Time Down Here" CD/ 30:43.
Ok, now I'm no well of knowledge when it comes ska-punk so all I can say is that these guys are pretty good at what they do. It ain't my bag and their inoffensive Fat Wreck vocal harmonies get on my wick a bit come the third song. For me a band like this needs to have a bit more balls such as the VGS or CAPDOWN. The odd gang shout / backing vocal adds a nice little hardcore edge now and then and the use of a theramin and the noise intro. to song

seven is a fairly redeeming factor. But the whole American college, sensitive, "fun guys that'd be the life and soul of any beach party" thing makes me a bit on the sick side. I'm probably just jealous that they'd be able steal all the girls away from me if I was too pissed at the side of the camp fire... now where's that new Dead and Gone record? *(JD)*
JUMP UP, PO Box 13189, Chicago, IL 60613, USA.
www.jumpuprecords.com

FIVE DAYS OFF - "Coast to Coast" CD/ 30:20.
Here's twelve songs of great melodic hardcore. This doesn't do much for me but it really is good if you like that kind of thing. There's the continuous harmonising of vocals, the upbeat pace, the chunky guitars and the themes of being randy, having a broken heart and not being judged that you'd find on any American punk rock bands' album. There's also a faithful cover of the 7 SECONDS classic 'Young Til I Die' for your pleasure. *(JD)*
FUNTIME, J. Quinten Vlasselaar 13. 3221 Nieuwrrode (Holsbeek), Belgium.
www.funtimerecords.com

FIVE KNUCKLE - "Lost For Words, Far From Speechless" CD/ 44:01.
Fucking yes! This album just roars with brutal rocking songs from start to finish with no let up. It's hardcore with just a hint of ska for seasoning and a lot of great tunes for that full-bodied flavour. With lyrics that actually mean something too and try and make the listener think, this album is just an intense and kick-ass release! *(DM)*
HOUSEHOLD NAME, PO Box 12286, London, SW9 6FE, UK.

FLATPIG - "Drowning" CD/ 38:36.
Well now then, this is pretty excellent hardcore punk. Very much in the vein of the early 80's, with a big dose of NEGATIVE APPROACH crossed with some UK82 type stuff. Excellent storming punk, fast paced and well-done. Good lyrics and the front cover is ace. *(MH)*
www.flatpig.co.uk

FLATPIG - "Wasted" CD/ 10:04.
Only 4 songs this time from this ripping band. A little more mature sounding than the above release, but as raging as ever and saying that, a band to keep your eyes open for. *(MH)*
www.flatpig.co.uk

FLIPSIDES, THE - "Clever One" CD/ 29:40.
Ultra-breezy Poppy sounds drifting in from San Francisco, that's gum chewing, Chuck T tapping and best listened to on a bright summers day. Happy music, illuminated by singer (and guitarist) Sabrina Stewart, who gives these semi-paced 3 chord compositions a BANGLES \ LITTLE GIRLS flavour, that's sure to get 'em Rodney on The Roq type rotation. Songs about romancing, knock backs, etc. Nothing too taxing in other words. "Because I Can" and "60's" were the two pick songs for me. And being that the purpose of these reviews is to 'promote' the bands music, can I take this opportunity for a shot of direct marketing, by recommending THE FLIPSIDES to Cov John, in Southampton, cuz this is totally up your street mate. Hey, every bit helps right! *(PC)*
PINK AND BLACK, PO Box 190516, San Francisco, CA 94119, USA.

FLOGGING MOLLY - "Drunken Lullabies" CD/ 45:13.
I knew this would be good as soon as I saw the list of instruments these guys play! Accordion, tin whistle, uilleann pipes, fiddle, mandolin, banjo, bodhran, bazouki and even spoons accompany the normal guitars, drums and bass in this high octane Irish folk-punk album. It's like being sat in a local public house in the wilds of Ireland while a band plays alcohol fuelled traditional ballads into the night...the only thing is, the band are all on high speed, electric guitars are used, and they aren't afraid to rock out. Amazingly energetic and captivating stuff...like a punk rock version of THE FUREYS. Melancholic yet redemptive, FLOGGING MOLLY have a distinct sound, not just adding the "Irish" tint to stale US punk rock, or the "punk rock" tint to stale folk, like so many other "Irish" American punk bands, but doing something great of their own, something unique, special, and hugely enjoyable. *(DM)*
BURNING HEART, Box 441, 701 48 Örebro, Sweden.

FLOOR - Self Titled CD/ 32:31.
Mark Nikolich at Atomic Audio Studios deserves a medal for services rendered to the advancement of the super-low-bass-sonics in music. The bass sound on this disc is just so good, it's low as fuck, like the echo of a mammoth in a volcanic crater - that sort of low, you know the type. And it's balanced perfectly by a crisply distorted guitar sound, pummelling drums and the insane contrast of smoothly chanted vocals. Yet with all of this, it's as intimately melodic as it is granite-pulverising. It's similar to how HELMET were able to take punishingly heavy music and make it inexplicably melodic. But where HELMET were all about choppy riffs and repetitive beats, FLOOR are doing it with all-out power riffs and droning rhythms, glossed off with those super-smooth vocals. It's innovative and you'd better believe it works like a fresh-lubed machine. Clean and effective artwork tops this release off with the grace it deserves. *(RR)*
NO IDEA, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32684, USA.

FOR THE DAY - "Love Isn't Brains, Children..." CD/ 43:26.
Two men walk into a bar. One turns to the other and says, "I had to review the new FOR THE DAY album for Fracture this morning." The other man looks at him in horror and says "but don't they sound like a terrible and unremarkable poppier version of a poorly imitated LEATHERFACE?" "Yes." Replied the first man, "That's why I gave them such a bad review!" *(DM)*
SCENE POLICE c/o DPM, Humboldtstr. 15, 53115, Bonn, Germany.

FORDIRELIFESAKE - "Breathing Is Only Half The Function" CD/ 35:54.
Hmmmm, metal metal metal. It's such a strange beast for me. Now I love a good bit of metal me, but the kind of metal these guys are playing just doesn't do it for me. On paper this could look good to any metal or hardcore fan - widdly as fuck riffs, fast drums, chuggy breakdowns and loads of bloody screaming. It could even read like an album that I know I like, say "Jane Doe" by CONVERGE for example. But the way these guys write they're songs and widdle they're guitars just sucks in my opinion. There's so many guitar squeals and chorus-peddled wank solos that I'm nearly going to be sick all over this keyboard. We're talking *total* Steve Vai-guitar-wank-overdose territory here! The singer also doesn't know when to shut up - ever heard of less is more? The occasional 'emo' sing-y bit puts me off too. Although track four 'cross my heart, hope to die' has a nice acoustic guitar / violin intro. topped off nicely with some female vocals supplied by Kara Dupuy. All in all I think this sucks. *(JD)*
CLOUD OVER HEAD, 401 Giles Avenue, Blissfield, MI 00000, USA.

FORWARD - "Fucked Up" CD/ 17:21.
All the way from Japan, I think I've reviewed something by FORWARD before, can't remember what the flip I said about that but this is intense punk stuff. They remind me of those masters of the intense hardcore, gruff, grind ASSERT. This is pretty much on the edge of what I like but after a few plays I've got into it a bit and the eight tracks on this CD were as much as I could take without switching off. The lyrics are political. *(GS)*
H:G FACT.

FOUR SQUARE - "When Weeks Were Weekends" CD/ 36:17.
Cripes, those Boss Tuneage A&R men must have set up camp in every rock venue in Canada, and here's another of their successes! FOUR SQUARE hit the tune-crammed rock nail right on the head with 11 tracks of super-hooked songs all set to keep the Summer shining right into Autumn. I guess they're like a blend of some of the labels finest other bands - the passionate rock of JOSHUA, the immaculate hooks of WOOLWORTHY and a hint of THE JONES' urgency at times. It's plain to see across tracks like "We Saw Everything", "Some Weaker Thoughts" and "Just One Day" that FOUR SQUARE really have the sort of knack for capturing a fantastic tune that's usually reserved for the crimininally underrated TUGBOAT ANNIE. I'm playing this loud, I'm grinning. *(RR)*
BOSS TUNEAGE, PO Box 74, Sandy, G19 2WB, UK.

FUCKED UP - "No Pasaran" 7".
I already own a copy of this, bought it a couple of months ago, so I knew this is one awesome record. Fast, raw, but incredible quality and every bit a furious and hardcore to the max as one could be. They take that basic NEGATIVE APPROACH style of hardcore, but bring it up to date and smack a dose of angry hate to it. The A side is political as fuck, the B side shows the fucked up nature of humans. There are only two songs, but I think they are recording for more stuff, they need to as this is just incredible. We need more FUCKED UP and bands like this. There are a lot of good bands out there today and this is just one of them. Buy this 7" today, if you don't then you are not hardcore - period. *(MH)*
DERANGED, PO Box 543, Station P, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2T1, Canada.

FULL COURT PRESS - "Live Life Large" CD/ 37:26.
Muggins here gets sent rap-metal stuff on a regular basis, and I pray to hear something as fresh as that first RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE album or the early DOWNSET CD. Y'know, political commentary, social awareness, lyrics reeling off facts and statistics and stuff the Government doesn't want you to hear, that type of stuff. Unfortunately FULL COURT PRESS take a different route, similar to that of E TOWN CONCRETE but a bit more diverse, with some tracks reminiscent of late MADBALL, some more relaxed hip hop style tracks and even some female vocals at the end. The lyrics really aren't saying anything other than the usual hardcore topics of losing friends, having a tough time growing up, standing strong etc. "You came to test my skills, well mine pay the bills and you ain't got a dime". Umm, yeah, OK. I've heard enough. *(SM)*
GANGSTYLE, Ecrevissestraat 41, 6125, AW, Obbicht, The Netherlands.

G-WHIZ - "The Pop Punk Singles Collection 1989-2002" CD/ 55:49
As the title would suggest, a compilation of six EP's from G-WHIZ, released to precede their reformation and new album coming later this year. This goes right back to their rawer sound from the split with CRIMPSHRINE which sounds like early DESCENDENTS circa "The Fat EP", through the nine tracks from the great "Eat at Ed's" which parallels the ALL sound around the time they released "Allroy Saves". I guess the similarity comes in those clicky basslines and the vocal delivery. Their new stuff included on here (including one song from their forthcoming album) sounds more akin to modern ALL, natch, so in that respect it also reminds me of THE UNKNOWN and that's a fine compliment indeed since those boys rock like monkeys. Some of the older material on here is probably surplus to requirements, but on the whole this is just neat 1990's US pop-punk. *(RR)*
BOSS TUNEAGE, PO Box 74, Sandy, SG19 2WB, UK.

GASH - "A Day Off For The Conscience" CD/ 47:57.
Ever heard of those American punk rock record labels that are quite big names in the scene? Oh shit, what are their names again, I forget? Oh yeah, Epitaph and Fat Wreck... well I can tell you a band who certainly have heard of those labels and don't care who knows it : GASH. You see, unlike their debut release in 1998 which I really liked, this new album seems to be Epi-FatT punk by numbers with nothing at all that makes it stand out from the crowd, in quiet amnesia to the fact that a good band need to do something that makes you remember them if they are to be a success. This is just well produced, bland pointlessness with too few interesting moments to make it worth picking up and you'd probably be better trawling through the Epi-Fat back catalogues and listening to the originals that these guys are ripping off than wasting money on these second hand ideas. GASH? Yes it is. A big old pile of it! *(DM)*
GOLF, PO Box 6, Wallingford D.O, OX10 9FB, UK.

GLORYHOLES, THE - "Knock You Up" CD/ 36:22.
A welcome return to the fray of former SINISTER SIX vocalist Doug White, who has a long service record with Empty - I've got a 7" of theirs from '92 - and he's back in firebrand fashion, fronting this ballistic Seattle five-piece. A constant salvo of scrappy and catchy Sixties Garage Punking blasts (let's hear it for THE MONO MEN and NOMADS!), with a sporadic shot of low heel Soul, is positively just the sorta volatile sounds I like to hear launched from my speakers and ricocheting off the walls. Doug's maniacal voice may be the dominant force here, but the twin guitar bombardment is ceaseless. 15 songs total, Engineered and Mastered by Jack Endino, Produced and Mixed by Tim Kerr, and 3 plays in I'm ready to declare this my disc of the issue. *(PC)*
EMPTY US, PO Box 12034, Seattle, WA 98012, USA.

GO JIMMY GO - "Slow Time" CD/ 55:08.
Now, unlike some folk I don't mind my ska-punk if it's done well. GO JIMMY GO however, seem to have decided to take the punk out of ska and have made a dull and monotonous pure ska album that quite literally bored me to tears so much that I wondered whether the

pain of sitting listening to this kind of crap was worth it just for some free CD's? I guess if you like ska-not ska-punk but ska-then you'll dig this, but as Bill Murray rightly pointed out in "Groundhog Day" some people like blood sausage too. Me, I don't like either blood sausage or this stultifying guff. *(DM)*
JUMP UP, PO Box 13189, Chicago, IL, 60613, USA.

GRABB, JARED - "On the Inside" CD/ 33:57.
Jared Grabb is another one of those gits that was obviously blessed at birth with excessive musical skills as on here he sings and plays guitar as well as contributing bass guitar to some tracks and dulcimer and piano to other tracks. He also did some pretty nice paintings for the booklet too. Oh, and did I mention he can write a very fine song? Although "On the Inside" is loosely acoustic based with the guitar and vocals taking prominence, each song is fully-laden with a band that often builds up the layers into a powerful sound. This actually sounds a lot like if BRAID recorded an acoustic album, the vocal delivery has a lot in common with Bob Nanna's and in fact this was recorded by the same guy that steered the sounds of BRAID, AMERICAN FOOTBALL and PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS, just to give you a couple of other places to conveniently hang your preconceptions on. When done badly, records like this can sound like cringeworthy ego-fests, but when done right they sound honest and heartfelt. Jared Grabb is the latter, fortunately. *(RR)*
THINKER THOUGHT, 1002 Devonshire Road, Washington, IL 61571, USA.

GREGOR SAMSA - Self Titled CD/ 18:06.
3 drawn-out tracks of ethereal and slumberous sounds from this enigmatic band. And it's beautiful. There's so few bands that innately feel how to make music like this successfully - GODSPEED and A SILVER MOUNT ZION are two of them and now GREGOR SAMSA are a third. There's too many failures to even begin contemplating. Each track oozes and rolls from the speakers with pianos, a lilting hypnotic female voice and layers upon layers of luscious sounds building each song with care. It's languorous and decadent and the enigma is only enhanced by the symbols for track titles and minimal trace-paper packaging. *(RR)*
IODINE, 1085 Commonwealth Avenue, PMB 318, Boston, MA 02215, USA.

GRRRLSCOUTS, THE - "Electric Underground" CDEP/ 11:18.
Seven songs in eleven minutes, one of which has the much-loved and repeated catchy lyric: "She's ugly but she likes THE RAMONES". THE GRRRLSCOUTS, originally known as STANK FEET, are a high school bedroom band who obviously adored SCREECHING WEASEL and eventually recorded in a university vending machine room. This is a gem and lucky it exists - there must be hundreds of bands of this ilk who never record anything. Singer Eric's band history reads like an adolescent punk story and gives the band some intriguing youthful context. If you like SCREECHING WEASEL, you'll love this. *(HE)*
MUTANT POP, 5010 NW Shasta, Corvallis, OR 97330, USA.

GUNMOLL / FIFTH HOUR HERO - Split CD/ 37:57.
A welcome return here from the snazzy GUNMOLL with their LEATHERFACE / HOT WATER MUSIC influenced punk rock - and it's a good return too as they kick things off with the highly desirable 'Forget Me Not' which has one of the sweetest guitar sounds you'll hear this year! As things progress you realise that GUNMOLL really do like THE 'FACE a lot, as the second track has a real "Horsebox" feel to it. It's all about the gruff vocals and melodic genius - and I'm with the 'in crowd' when it comes to that for sure. Great stuff. Next up is five new DISCOUNT songs. Uh, I mean FIFTH HOUR HERO songs. Seriously though, their first track on here is so insanely DISCOUNT (circa "Ataxia" and "Half Fiction") right down to the vocals, it's unbelievable. But whatever, it's about a hundred times better than changing your name to "Bicycle" and "VW" or whatever, and cranking out some dull, en vogue, pretentious garage wank - that's for sure. As their songs go on, they become less DISCOUNT-esque, but it's still pretty apparent that FIFTH HOUR liked that band a lot. All that's left now is to look out for their new album which, I think, is going to be out on No Idea this year. Can't wait. *(MD)*
NO IDEA, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604 - 4636, USA.

GUTTERMOUTH - "Gusto" CD.
It's not just because this BLINK 182 wannabe disc arrived with no packaging at all that makes me publicly decry it as rotten faecal pigcock. Fact is, if it had arrived in a velvet-coated case with free money I would still have declared it to be rotten faecal pigcock. *(RR)*
EPITAPH.

HERODISHONEST - "Juggernaut" CD/ 24:28.
From Helsinki, Finland HERODISHONEST play great, raging hardcore punk! This album rocks, when you want waking up or you've just been listening to too much doom metal, this album is da ticket! This is one dirty sounding album that has elements of old school hardcore, crust and punk - GORILLA BISCUITS meets AGNOSTIC FRONT and INFEST. Track eight 'I've got a reason to live' reminds me of the kind of '80's crossover/thrash riffs you'd find on any D.R.I record! Anyway this is great and although these guys' lyrics are trying to say something about today's fucked up consumer society and the like, they don't take themselves wholly seriously - check out how they credit themselves, Jack Hammer is credited as providing clairvoyance, levitation, tantric love and moist ass rather than guitar or drums!! *(JD)*
IF SOCIETY, Box 403 00121, Helsinki, Finland.
www.ifsociety.com

HANSON BROTHERS - "My Game" CD/ 39:07.
No, this is not the latest album from those Mmm Bopping suckers of Satan's cock, but is the new offering from the pop-punk alter-egos of NOMEANSNO, (unfortunately?) named after the lovable lumber giving hockey hooligans from the movie Slap Shot. Fifteen awesome power driven sing-along songs fill this disc that is worth getting for the terrific BLACK FLAG parodying cover alone, and a heavy RAMONES influence is worn throughout, especially in the excellent song "Joey Had To Go" which is a musical goodbye to the deceased singer. From the opening cry of "1-2-3-4" this album rages through song after song about love, about hockey, and about a love of hockey, with not a single wasted second or extraneous note played. A complete difference from the dark complexity of NOMEANS NO this is simple and basic punk and roll and as good as if not better than either of the Hanson's former releases "Gross Misconduct" or "Sudden Death". A brilliant release; no fancy schmancy pants and no dipsy doodle dancing, just puck rock a la Hanson. *(DM)*
SOUTHERN.

HIDING WITH GIRLS - "Marty McFly" CDS/ 6:51.
Now this is exactly what I'm talking about in my column this issue - *"HIDING WITH GIRLS showcase everything that is good about the new era of UK post-hardcore"* is what the press blurb that came with this says... see the typing error there? If not, I'll make the correction for you - *"HIDING WITH GIRLS showcase everything that is bad about the new era of UK post-hardcore"*. There, that makes more sense. Harsh? Mate, I've only just begun. And so the press blurb continues... *"Combining huge rock laden melodies and slick production and drawing their influences from the likes of HUNDRED REASONS, NEW FOUND GLORY, TOOL and GLASSJAW... Already tipped as a 'massive shining light for the future'..."* etc, etc, etc. Well here's the facts, Jack - vocally, this band is disgustingly insincere. Lyrically, this band is totally fucking redundant. Musically, this band does that thing where they take a sound that they think is "emo" and mix it with that other sound that everyone likes called "nu metal". What happens then is that this band end up sounding exactly like LOST PROPHETS, right down to the cheese central backing vocals at the end of the first track that have that awful Mike Paton twang to them. This band make me feel sick. This band is EVERYTHING WRONG with whatever this UK post-hardcore scene they believe to be a part of is all about. This band want to be on MTV2. This band want to *be* HUNDRED REASONS. This band doesn't give a flying fuck about the underground punk scene - so why should I give a flying fuck about this band? Hook me up with your street team already, because then I can be a stupid, gullible fucking idiot as well. Shoot me baby... JUST FUCKING SHOOT ME!!! *(MD)*
www.hidingwithgirls.com

HIRETSUKAN - "Invasive / Exotic" MCD/ 16:10.
This is pretty dark stuff. Hailing from New York, HIRETSUKAN play manic and (ultra)screamed hardcore. The guitars display the soulful/technical kind of touches that someone like PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS may use with an array of rythms from maniacal fast breaks to energetic swing. Energy is the name of the game for these guys! I think I've heard a comparison to CRADLE OF FILTH made about these guys and although Michelle's vocals are high pitched and *totally* screamed, there's not really any black metal theatrics going on here. This is fucking good though, and check out the cover of METALLICA's 'Creeping Death' at the end, not bad at all! *(JD)*
G7 WELCOMING COMMITTEE, PO Box 27006, C-360 Main Street Winnipeg, MB R3C 4T3, Canada / www.g7welcomingcommittee.com

HORACE GOES SKIING - "Yeah, Right, Sure" CD/ 38:40.
Bland power-pop boredom here that's kind of like a really bad version of TRAVIS CUT covering the very worst of BLINK 182 in what seems to me to be a blatant attempt at pissing the world off starting with those who have to review this album. *(DM)*
POPKID, 759 Bloomfield Avenue, PMB 182, Montclair, NJ, 07006, USA.

HOST SEPIA, THE / NIMBUS CLOUD, THE - "The Moving Images" 12" EP.
"Darkness" and "surrealism" are the two words used to define both THE HOST SEPIA and THE NIMBUS CLOUD respectively on this split EP release. THE HOST SEPIA is Tim from SOON THE DARKNESS's side project and performing act. Unlike STD, the tracks are level paced, eerie and almost noiseless. They're like overhearing conversations and noises in a city block in the middle of a Sunday night. "Like Tigers" the opener adds loops and sounds that reminds me of a band no-one will remember called MEAT BEAT MANIFESTO at their most unconfrontational. "Unknown space" is a spacious electronica trip into the unknown. Those just two highlight tracks. THE NIMBUS CLOUD are more electronic, dancey, more blips and blurts, less haunting. On a lovely thick slab of vinyl. *(HE)*
SATELLITES AND CLOUD 1 Nantes Close, Wandsworth, London, SW18 1JL, UK.

HOT ROD CIRCUIT - "Sorry About Tommorow" CD/ 34:20.
See, now this is the problem with "instant" albums. I've had this for ages, and when I first put it on, aside from the major label production and obvious MTV2 appeal, I quite liked this record. I played it on my CD walkman on a few jaunts to work and I thought it was pretty catchy but then, out of the blue, its appeal ran out - kind of like the last SAVES THE DAY album. Coincidentally, both those records are on Vagrant. What this means I don't know, exccept that maybe "instant hits" make a lot of money. Just like Cocaine, the high is short and expensive, and I think that's why this "instant rock" is selling so well at the moment - it's super catchy, glamorous, well produced and very fashionable. But at the end of the day, when all's said and done, I'm left with a really empty feeling after listening to this album for a month or so. As I said, it's something I just can't put my finger on, but it's like, there's just no "staying power" and I think that's the clincher. This is instant, apolitical, fashionable schlock that, in the end, has more to do with BACKSTEET BOYS than BLACK FLAG. This is not a punk record by any means, but something tells me you'll like it anyway. *(MD)*
VAGRANT, 2118 Willshire Blvd, PMB 361, Santa Monica, CA 90403, USA.

HOT WATER MUSIC - "Caution" CD/ 36:30.
That's the fucking boy! So last year's "A Flight and a Crash" was a pretty good record. A lot of people liked it, but it definitely wasn't my favourite HOT WATER record. That accolade has been kept heavily guarded under lock and key for a few years now for "No Division" which still has some of their best straight up punk rock songs ever on it (more kids sang along to the line *"live your heart and never follow"* at their recent South Wales gig than any other line - so the kids are on my side with that one for sure!) but you know what? "Caution" is as good as "No Division". Now I've really got my teeth into it (and got to hear some of these songs live already) I can safely say that this record absolutely fucking destroys all HOT WATER MUSIC wannabe's out of the water. As bands water their songs down with a desperate, limp wristed desire to be the next big "emo" success, it's great to see a band like HOT WATER MUSIC who do, by all accounts, have some great slower songs, (and have, sickeningly, been refered to as "emo" in the past) come along and put out one of their punkest fucking albums ever. From the word go it's melodic, gruff, tuneful, catchy, mid-paced to fast punk rock. The opener 'Remedy' is genius, 'Trusty Chords' just plain rules, the third track 'I Was a Mountain' has a great, almost RUTS guitar riff, track 11 'Wayfarer' is absolute MISFITS, NAKED RAYGUN, PANTHRO UK genius with some of the best goddamn "woah's" I've heard since RAYGUN's 'Solidiers Requiem'... and the rest is fucking history. From opener to 'The End', this record will absolutely blow you away. It'll be record of the year for many people I'm sure and so what if they all shaved their beards off (much to the horror of all their bearded fans on their recent UK tour, hahaha!), they still fucking rule the roost! Essential. *(MD)*
EPITAPH / vinyl on NO IDEA.

HUMAN WRECKAGE - "Promotional Suicide" CD/ 14:44.
Just reading through he info sheet that came with the CD, it says that HUMAN WRECKAGE have been around for just over a year and their mission is to make some loud, fast Punk music. Well, I think they've just about achieved that on this six track CD and with influences like THE DAMNED, DISCHARGE and NOFX to name but a few, they can carry on in my opinion and long may they continue. *(GS)*
INFO, 22 John Street West, Sowerby Bridge, HX6 2NF, UK.

HUMUNGUS - "I Hate Mother Fucking Cops" / "A Reason To Care" CD/ 50:22.
This looks like two now deleted early LP's, CD's or something by the band have been brought together on one CD and I've treated it as such. Basically HUMUNGUS play full on, driving, Punk Rock on all the tracks contained on this CD. The lyrics seem to reflect what happened to one band member 'NICKI SICKI' who must have been jailed at some point for some sort of behaviour the cops found subversive. No clue as to what his crimes we're which is a shame but the attacks on authority are impressive! *(GS)*
BEER CITY, PO Box 26035, Milwaukee, WI 53226-0035, USA.

HUNTER GATHERER - "Low Standards for High Fives" CD/ 38:49.
Getting this was like getting the first HOT WATER MUSIC album I could lay my paws on, "Forever and Counting" - from the artwork (impressive three-colour abstract illustrations) to the as yet undiscovered sound of the music (two gravelly singers with somewhat different agendas lyrically but not musically and backed up by a mighty melodic hardcore sound). HUNTER-GATHERER have taken that approach but it sounds as fresh as if they had stumbled on this kind of music themselves. If I were a bigger HOT WATER MUSIC fan I might be just a little bit jealous of what HUNTER-GATHERER have managed to pull off with songs like "And Now You've Moved On", "Forever Had a Voice" and "Never Trust Anyone Again". Superb offering. Oh, one thing though - beards might be cool right now but it won't last. *(HE)*
IGNITION.

I AM SPARTACUS - "Forward!" CD/ 52:14.
This is something to do with BOB TILTON but it's much more soundscape than song - one of those recordings where the sound of the music and the outdoor plane and street sounds all sort of blend into one. It's dreamy, partly math rock in a Quarterstick type way (think cello, bass and you're on the right track), and lengthy. But on a tired hot summer night like tonight, even on a cold winter's night, listening to this long-player is a great way to wind down. *(HE)*
GRINGO, PO Box 3904, Clacton, Essex, CO15 5TF, UK.

I EXCUSE - "Burn the Empty to the Ash" CD/ 30:07
Without doubt one of Japan's finest bands right now - Kyoto's I EXCUSE play the sort of music that's almost become synonymous with Japanese punk rock these days; gritty, fast, melodic and political. And I EXCUSE have enough of these attributes to shame plenty of their American and British peers. In the half hour that this disc spans they unleash a dozen passionate songs with gravelled vocals spitting out personal and political diatribes over music that's fast and packed with tunes. The guitars chug and pick with precision, fuelled by a rhythm section that powers along at a heady pace and a dozen choruses each waiting to be chanted along to. Their track from the split with MANIFESTO JUKEBOX sounds better than ever on here. I EXCUSE cover a lot of the ground between early LEATHERFACE albums, melding the raw energy of "Fill Your Boots" and the rough melodies of "Mush" and it sounds as good as you'd expect. Whatever causes so many Japanese bands to play with this sort of fervour, let's get some of it over here. *(RR)*
SNUFFY SMILE, 4-1-16-201 Daita, Setagaya-Ku, Tokyo 155-0033, Japan.

INDICATOR - "Critical Resistance" CD/ 13:43
Yeah! I like this! Seven tracks of what I think must be fairly political punk. OK, so they do not break any new ground musically but the enthusiasm for the cause seems to be there and that's what counts. If you liked the thrashier side of the early 80's punk sound with a splash of Oi POLLOI and the DEPRAVED thrown in, then you'll be pretty much guaranteed to like INDICATOR. Three quid from the address below. *(GS)*
INDICATOR, 10 Calverley Bridge, Rodley, Leeds, LS13 1NF, UK.

INFECT - "Estrepito" 7".
Now here`s a real surprise. An all girl band from Brasil who for as far as I can tell are all straight edge! Musically they`re more than competant at what they do. In fact they have more energy than most of the crappy SxE bands doing the rounds. You are not going to get anything to ground breaking here but what you do get is fast, pissed off and passsionate music played like their lives depend on it. Thirteen songs which thankfully all have translations and good lyrics they are to dealing with topics like sexism, globalism and the song `Latin America` which is on about the fact that with them being from that part of the world they`re over-looked in the world of punk rock. Not wrong there, how many people follow the US bands religously yet could`nt name a band from anywhere in Europe let alone Brasil! The one downside to this record is the dreadful artwork, truly some of the worst in a while. Aside from that you can`t go to wrong. *(FU)*
COMMITMENT, Klein Muiden 38, 1393 RL, Nigtevecht, Netherlands

(INTERNATIONAL) NOISE CONSPIRACY, THE - "The First Conspiracy" CD/ 27:27.
A collection of previously unreleased / compilation / 7 inch material, this rocks in the kind of way you can only expect from T(I)N.CONSPIRACY. Picking, appropriating and glue-ing together all the best bits of 60's / 70's rock'n'roll, they certainly know how to make politics more fun! With the funk / hammond of "The First Conspiracy" and the STOOGES-esque bouce of 'The Blast Off' the CONSPIRACY makes me know who I'm gonna choose in the 'best-post-modern-garage-rock-band of the year' contest (no, it aint the HIVES and it *definitely* aint the STROKES!). Rock! *(JD)*
BURNING HEART.

ISRAELITES, THE - "Roots" CD/ 65:15.
Like a bad-ska nightmare these guys push their weak-ass Christian agenda through even weaker-assed music. People say you should be open-minded and not just write off a band because of their religion but luckily I didn't have to do that because the music alone is legitimately awful, however, I don't agree that religion should be seen as separate from the music when the music is all about the religion and these guys are *totally* all about "Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for dying on the cross for us giving us everlasting life". Religion is just so fucking weak and it certainly doesn't rock in any way shape or form. These guys are, to paraphrase good old JR, a haemorrhoid on the butt of punk rock. *(DM)*
JUMP UP.

JAKAL - "Nation Infection" CD/ 18:18.
I got no information at all with this, but their sound has some sort of Anarcho Punk / crossover feel to it which over the five tracks on this CD I quite like. That's some going as I'm pretty bored with the whole Ska-Punk thing generally. I think their lyrics are political if the sound is anything to go by but I'd like to have had them to follow the songs with. Still, if your curious then try the web site below as I didn't have the time. That may be a poor excuse but as I write this review I'm only a matter of hours away from leaving for my summer hols! and I've still got a stack more reviews to do for that slave driver 'Monk Dave'! *(GS)*
JAKALMUSIC / www.jakalmusic.co.uk

JAKE AND THE STIFFS - "If it Ain't Stiff... it Ain't Worth a Fuck" CD/ 19:06.
Doesn't really do it for me, this one. I hope I'm not put off by the photo of the band wearing PVC trousers and smiley face ties. They play a garage-y punk sound and on this disc play three original tracks and four covers. I think this kind of band is usually more interesting doing covers anyway but don't know the bands they're covering (THE KNOW, THE EJECTED and THE DRIFTERS) or the songs (there's a SEX PISTOLS track) so can't say whether they slaughter or succeed, but THE EJECTED cover "Gonna Get a Gun" goes down well. Interesting free movie with psychedelic dancing girls appears on the CD too. *(HE)*
MUTANT POP, 5010 NW Shasta, Corvallis, OR 97330, USA.

JERRY SPIDER GANG - "Dope Takin' Kamikazes" CD/ 39:10.
Very fuckn engaging reverberation from these French RocknRoll Kamikazes, and I've been playing this disc steadily for days now. Pulls together the best of... Scandinavian action, most definitely TURBO and COPTERS, injected with a shot of primal Detroit/Aussie combustion. Add a slurring mean-sounding singer, and fuzz- dripping guitars, with plenty of wah-wah kick, and I'm set. Word is they're a riot live, and I might have to make a recon over the Channel to find out for myself. In the meantime, more rotation is assured for the JERRY SPIDER GANG. Well, on my stereo at least. *(PC)*
SHARK ATTACK, BP 171, 75563 Paris, CEDEX 12, France.

JESUS AND THE GOSPEL FUCKERS / AGENT ORANGE - Split CD/ 42:06.
Classic Dutch hardcore from the 80's here. There has been a CD-R of the former floating around for a few months now. Raw as fuck hardcore, with slight early DISCHARGE influences. Mind you it's not dis-core as we know it today, in that it's been so bastardised. I had AGENT ORANGE's 2nd 7" in the 80's, but traded it with you some yank in the late 80's - we all make mistakes. They played amazing hardcore and I wish I had kept it. Good CD. *(MH)*
KANGAROO, Henk Smit, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA Amsterdam, Netherlands.

JETS TO BRAZIL - "Perfecting Lonliness" CD/ 67:48.
This came in pretty much the same week as JAWBREAKER's "Etc" CD, which is really bad timing because obviously that has been something I've been looking forward to for a long time. Anyway, here's how it is with me and JTB - I liked "Orange Rhyming Dictionary" a lot. It was the first album after JAWBREAKER split up, and was definitely the most 'BREAKER-esque of all the JTB releases so far. The last album, I quite liked it at the time, but have hardly played it since. And so this arrives. It's 12 tracks in 70 minutes. Do you honestly think I have 70 fucking minutes to take out of my hectic lifestyle to listen to all of this in one sitting? You can bet your vocal distortion device I fucking don't! Everyone knows all good (punk) albums shouldn't go much over 30 minutes (see new HWM album for proof!) but then I guess this isn't a punk album, and I'm sure my Neil Young albums are longer than 30 minutes... but anyway, from the first track you can see right away that any traces of JAWBREAKER are dead in the water. Sure, it's Blake's voice, and I love it - but when distorted in a bad indie way and put over a background of bland, insipid BLUR wannabe pop, it just doesn't do it for me I'm afraid. Sure, there's the odd good moment with the almost HUSKER DU-esque drumming on the second track, but that soon turns quickly to shit when the orchestra and "Blake distorter" comes in! Maybe I'm just having a "punk" day or something, but I mean I've definitely - with all the SHIT MUSIC that gets sent in for review every week - been looking to my old albums more and more recently. It doesn't get much better than 80's punk rock you know! So maybe when I get a spare 70 minutes one day, I'll really try and get into this record, but for now I think me and Blake are finished, and that hurts me deeply. Man, I didn't even get a phone call, letter of explanation or anything. He just packed his bags and left. Damn. *(MD)*
JADE TREE.

JOHN BROWN BATTERY - "Is Jinxed" CD/ 40:15.
And talking of JAWBREAKER, this lot have quite an "Unfun" feel to them which I like. In fact, I like it a lot! It actually also reminds me a hell of a lot of the Canadian band DBS' album "I is For Insignificant" (that was, for me, DBS' finest moment)... similar vocals (which also remind me somewhat of CRIMPSHRINE), similar melodic tuneage, similar backing vocals, similar lead guitar sound that gives some of the songs quite a poppy feel even though the whole mood of the music is not at all 'pop punk'. The end result in al this is a remarkable, hook laden piece of work that you should really be looking at picking up if you're also a big fan of SMALL BROWN BIKE and HOT WATER MUSIC. This has got the lot. *(MD)*
HEWHOCORRUPTSINC, 196 Fairfield, Elmhurst, IL 60126, USA.

JOHN WILKES BOOZE - "Five Pillars of Soul, Vol.1 : Russell & Kirstie" CD/ 12:03.
This oozes soul. Each volume of this series is going to take a different soul icon and rock out in their name - this one's for Melvin van Peebles who (thanks to the insert) I've now been educated about. Three tracks of hyper-spooked rock 'n' soul that blasts like NATION OF ULYSSES on acid. The singer has this sort of squealing shriek that rides over the top of a freaked-out rock 'n' roll sound. There's a part at the end of "Sweetback's Gonna Make It" where the drummer goes into a wicked solo and the vocalist is howling over the top "oh yeah, don't stop... woo... get outta here motherfucker!" in his wired soprano voice - that's soul. Their website has a photo of a white dude with a big sweaty afro thrashing his guitar whilst wearing a waistcoat - that's soul too. This is a pretty DIY release, limited to 300, so that's 300 people who can dance like fools to this crazy groove. *(RR)*
AFFIRMATION, PO Box 1771, Bloomington, IN 47402, USA.

JOHN WILKES BOOZE - "Five Pillars of Soul, Vol. 2 : Tania Hearst" CD/ 12:28.
OK, from the inlay to this I am guessing that this is part two of a five part musical series on sort of, modern revolutionary heroes who illustrate the band's interpretation of what "soul" is, with each e.p being devoted to songs about the highlighted person... in this case Tania Hearst. The story of Tania is fascinating and bizarre and it was worth getting this CD-R just to discover her weird and short life story, but that aside the music itself is really, really good. It is soul-punk: funky, free and rebellious. Like James Brown getting his hair cut by THE (I)NC and talking' 'bout revolution, these guys are interesting, energising and unique. *(DM)*
AFFIRMATION, PO Box 1771, Bloomington, IN 47402, USA.

JOHN WILKES BOOZE - "Five Pillars of Soul, Vol. 3 : Albert Ayler" CD/ 13:57.
Rambunctious White Trash Soul is the name of the game for these drink addled natives of Southern Indiana. It's a conceptual experience they're driving at, with the focus of their attention here on Albert Ayler, an "out-there" Jazz free former, and lesser known contemporary of Mingus and Coltrane, who the JWB feel they have a kindred sprit with. I know this cuz there's a lengthy written insert containing all the necessaries. The music is a primate raw affair, jagged and loud. I can dig it. But the singer, Seth Mahern, often howls in a screechy high-pitched whiney fashion, that does no favours - irritates me. And if his surname rings a bell with you North American '80's Hardcore junkies, then you're on the case - he is indeed a relative of ZERO BOY Paul Mahern, who produces the JWB, and put this release out on his resurrected label. You know what, I'd actually rather listen to "Vicious Circle" than this... *(PC)*
AFFIRMATION, PO Box 1771, Bloomington, IN 47402, USA.

JOHN WILKES BOOZE - Self Titled 7".
The a-side "Whiskey and Pills" is a fine Trash Rocker, pumping riffs and plenty of slip-slidin' guitars, kinda built around that old song "Gloria"... "do ya feel alright??" they scream, and I'll put my hand up and say - "YES!!!". Excellent track. On the other-side, a more restrained Rhythm 'n Booze number, titled "Mark Bolan Makes me Want to Fuck". Well, y'know, whatever rocks your boat. I prefer something a little bit more sophisticated to set the mood with the ladies. Soft lights, log fire, shag pile carpet, and the smooth sounds of Luther Van D. *(PC)*
ROCK'N'ROLL BLITZKREIG.

KANSALAIS TOTTELE MATTOMUUS - "Fuck Their Fuckin' System" 7".
This is real good. 5 songs of grinding crust, but with a little something more - originality. The vocals maybe female, I'm not too sure, but it's all good. Very political, dealing with the situation in Israel and refugees, hence the title of the 7". Mine is on red vinyl. *(MH)*
KAMASET LEVYT, Mechelininkatue 24 B 30, 00100 Helsinki, Finland.

KARATE - "Some Boots" CD/ 58:01.
This seems to be hot on the heels on their recent "Cancel/Sing" album that saw KARATE develop their freeform side more than ever before, but on "Some Boots" they've made a return to each of their previous records to combine them into a pretty compelling album. It seemed that KARATE were destined to move ever further away from the beautifully sparse pop and rock splinters of their early albums but on here they've resurrected the loose hooks and filtered them through the lazy jazz that they've been playing of late. The end result is an amazingly accomplished recording from three ridiculously over-talented musicians, each of whom fills "Some Boots" with their own touches; whether it's Farina's sumptuous guitar hooks and sentimental vocals, Goddard's erratic and jazz-fused basslines or McCarthy rolling the beat around the whole kit with an easygoing precision. Call it a return to form if you will, but to just call it another amazing record would be a fairer appraisal. *(RR)*
SOUTHERN.

KEEPSAKE - "Black Dress In A B-Movie" CD/ 45:00.
If NEW FOUND GLORY, GET UP KIDS and SAVES THE DAY are your trip then these guys are gonna please. Very smooth, highly-sung pop punk with those indie/emo trademark breakdowns (sic) and full of open-heart audio surgery. It's as sugary as a doughnut dick and even has some high-class cheese to add to the mix. It quite literally sent me to sleep upon the first listen and that's not a good sign. This sure does go straight for the jugular of commercial success, and it's flawless enough to make it, it's good, in fact it's perfect for the genre. If I was a 17 year old chick I'd maybe be dampening the gusset over this, it's cute boy rock and that's fine and dandy, but it does make the SMITHS sound like fucking NEGATIVE APPROACH and that takes some doing. I got toothache now. *(DS)*
FEARLESS, 13772 Goldenwest #545, Westminster, CA, 92683, USA.

KENISIA - "Nothing To Say" CD/ 42:15.
Yes, nothing to say indeed. Think ska-punk, think horns, think guitar, think blah, blah, fucking blah you've heard it all before. It's good at what it is, don't get me wrong…this is well played and well recorded music…it just is completely uneventful and doesn't stand out from any other ska-punk around in any way, shape or form. It's like if someone painted a great new version of the Mona Lisa…it'll look nice, and be a good painting, but there already is a Mona Lisa so who the fuck needs another one for bastard's sake and wouldn't the artist have been better off doing something new? The one good innovation on this album that made me chuckle is the secret track that is a live, spoken word thanks list…but as good an idea as that is, as it's full of in gags for the band and their friends eventually that just gets dull too. *(DM)*
HOUSEHOLD NAME.

KERBLOKI - Self Titled CD/ 39:13.
Cool, this isn't what I was expecting. Looking at the artwork one can find hand rendered text, disjointed photo-collage and typewriter-ed lyrics. What do you think? Emo? Post hardcore? Death metal? No, a fucking HIP HOP album! I like my PUBLIC ENEMY, I like my RUN DMC but that's about the extent of my knowledge. All I can say is that this quite good in parts. Some old school sounding beats meet live drums, the *occasional* chunky guitar riff (this definitely isn't a rap metal band here ok!) and some fairly good mc-ing. I think. The latin vibe to song one 'Lightening Wads' is a right hooker into the album but the rest don't quite follow the with same quality. In fact the keyboard line on track three is a little bit too VANILLA ICE for me! Song five 'I.T.V' (I hope it's not about the 'quality' programming that us British have to endure from possibly the worst tabloid t.v station in the world!) is a nice quirky instrumental with a really worldly vibe to it due to it's plethora of different instruments. This is ok but I can't say I'd listen to it many times after this though. *(JD)*
BIFOCAL MEDIA, PO Box 50106, Raleigh, NC 27650-0108, USA.

KID BLUNT - "82" CD/ 26:32.
Surely this should have gone into Russell's pile, what with its huge photograph collage of wacky hi-jinks! Ok, musically this is a pretty poor third-rate LAGWAGON / STRUNG OUT style, recorded badly and it is all under-rehearsed, I bet they couldn't play the same song twice in a row the same. The vocals sound as if the singer is going over these songs for only the second or third time, I can't see a method, a steady vocal level or style. Why put this out right now? Why not practice more and let the songs grow and your style evolve. At this point the band's sound is without personality. This isn't shit, the band can play and have ideas, I can see and hear that, but they rushed this out and that's a shame, as it's just not come out terribly well. In a year's time they'll hate this, sorry, all I can go by is what's on this CD. *(DS)*
www.goozer.com

KILLEREST EXPRESSION, THE - "Four Days That Shook the World" CD/ 26:02.
I'd heard good things about this band and actually had this CD on my purchase list, then I got sent 2 copies in the space of 24 hours! I've played this a fair few times over the past week or so and while I have to confess it's not exactly blown me away, there is no denying that they have a certain something. Firstly, they can play their instruments and play them damn well, there are elements of a clean tuneful hardcore sound, there's rock-out indie parts and an amalgamation of styles that renders any type of classification and pigeon-holing redundant. It sounds very good, unfortunately I am left holding nothing when it's over. I have a feeling they are a band I'll need to see live before it makes true sense to me. Damn, I really want to like this more than I do, but I'm not going to lie. *(DS)*
IN AT THE DEEP END, 82 Barlow Drive, South Awsworth, NG16 2TD, UK.

KILLS, THE - "Black Rooster" CD/ 18:32.
Sleazy lo-fi druggy VELVETS haze, from this couple who operate under the monikers - VV and Hotel. First two songs "Cat Claw" and "Black Rooster (Fuck and Fight)" are actually pretty groovy. "Wait" is listless - indulgent and boring. I hit next>> and landed in "Dropout Boogie", a CAPTAIN BEEFHEART cover, that has 'em back in fucked / stagger / crawl mode, and VV howling like a vixen to repetitive riff slash. The closing "Gum" is arty trippy shit. Another case of hit and miss. *(PC)*
DIM MAK, PO Box 14041, Santa Barbara, CA 93107, USA.

KMP - S/T CD / 52:06.
I actually thought that this was just packing material that Dave had used to protect the rest of me review material. Some kids pamphlet about maths, explaining percentages! There`s a CD glued to the inside though which only just caught my eye. Couple the packaging with the name Mr. Ewan Frater and I knew something daft was going to be going on. Take GOD SPEED YOU BLACK EMPEROR, OLD MAN GLOOM, PSYWARFARE and a heap of Prog Rock and you might be near to where this bunch of freaks are coming from. Totally out there man! I can see what they`re trying to do, it`s just it doesn't work out as far as I can tell. There`s the ideas, but I don`t think they have it in them to create musically what`s going on in their minds. It just bored me. The production doesn't help as it`s pretty weak. *(FU)*
NO ADDRESS?

KNIVES OUT - "Heartburn" CDEP/ 9:54.
Violent name for a relatively violent band (musically, that is!) and some snazzy packaging to boot (SWORN IN must be jealous!)... If the singer screamed, people would be calling this 'screamo'. But he doesn't, he just sings nastily. Musically, it's pounding, brooding hardcore that has an almost DEAD INSIDE feel to it. It's monotonous and spiteful, but sounds good. And I think this label is something to do with BOY SETS FIRE. *(MD)*
DEATHWISH / www.deathwishinc.com

KUNG FU KILLERS - "Game of Death" CD/ 13:17.
Although this does fit in with the TKO band sound, there's something else in the mix. A mid-80s US hardcore edge that really sounds old, but at the same time fresh to these ears after an evening of the emo and indie shit I have had to sit through! I am reminded of the old SST band The STAINS and that ain't a bad thing. The fact that the last 2 songs on this 6 tracker are covers of old MISFITS and BLACK FLAG songs, I'd say the early 80's sound isn't an accident. Not so much street punk as straight-forward, old school US punk hardcore. *(DS)*
TKO, 3126 West Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA 23221, USA.

KURT - "La Guard" LP.
It's great when you think a band has split up and then from out of the blue a new album comes along that delivers a punch hard enough to wind you. KURT's previous albums had been good, but "La Guard" is fucking fantastic. Eight tracks that are over far too fast, as they blast through hardcore that's tight, clever and full of infectious grooves - like a more direct DRIVE LIKE JEHU with the soul of HOT SNAKES and blessed with the rumpshaking of THE CAPITOL CITY DUSTERS or any other number of fine DC bands for that matter. Guitars that strip off riffs like hot paint, a drummer that pounds the shit out of every beat and a vocalist that hollers the words as though they're his last. Plays on 45rpm vinyl too - a format that was made for records as good as this. *(RR)*
X-MIST, PO Box 1545, 72195 Nagold, Germany (in UK : traqueto@postmaster.co.uk)

LA MOTTA - Self Titled CD/ 32:14.
This is a cool release of mellowish power poppy stuff that totally hits the right spot. All ten songs are good, but closing number "Black Sugar" is the stuff that pop-punk dreams are made of. Featuring guys from THE PIXIES and ASEXUALS too, this CD kicks the crocodile's heiny and will rock everyone's roll. *(DM)*
BOSS TUNEAGE, PO Box 74, Sandy, S619 2YB, UK.

LES VIPERS / HOLY CURSE - "Rock'n'Roll Ain't No Solution" CD/ 29:37.
A bad split CD of two weak French punk'n'roll bands that had such crappy production that it just sounded too quiet and fuzzy for my liking and just came over to me as being a boring and unoriginal waste of time. *(DM)*
SMALL BUDGET, BPN 07, 78 110 Levesinet Cedex, France.

LEWIS - "Even So" CD/ 45:06.
This is great. From Dallas, Texas Lewis play a kind of melodic rock that instantly reminds me of RADIOHEAD just because of the singer's voice. Although I bet he must get frustrated with

comparisons to Thom Yorke, but face it matey - your voice is *very* fucking similar! He really has such a strong voice and it's good to hear it coming out in different ways; sometimes distorted, sometimes beautifully harmonised. I guess this could be called 'emo' by some people but I think it would be too lazy a label (aren't they all?) to be pinned on them. To me this is just perfectly executed melodic rock. I would rather go for the words 'melancholic', 'thoughtful' or 'intelligent' rock than 'emo'. I have to admit that this doesn't hold my attention for the whole album as I could do with a bit more balls here and there (damn I must be a meathead or something). Nice production too. *(JD)*
DEEP ELM, PO Box 36939, Charlotte, NC ?????, USA.
www.deepelm.com

MAR - "To The Beat Of A Cold Heart" CD/ 31:12.
Neat digipack, ruined by a holepunch. Go read my DEADLOCK review for my rant about this little pet hate of mine. MAR play turbulent, shrieked, 'technical' metallic hardcore with hints of THE YEAR OF OUR LORD, ZAO and STARKWEATHER, with some good old blast-beats thrown in. Lots and lots is going on here and they've really mastered their instruments too. The lyrical focus is nothing to be taken lightly either, for the most part, they seem obsessed with suicide (more-so than UNBROKEN even) desperation, numbness, the need to escape bad memories and the repeated references to 'painting it all red' by cutting your writes. Heavy shit, but not done in an irresponsible, glorifying way. *(SM)*
INVERTEBRATA / www.invertebrata.net

MEGASUPERULTRA - "...Back To Take Another Bow" CD/ 23:54.
A cool little album here from a band who play a strange variation of ska-punk. There's just something a little odd about it which I like, lot's of changes and weird bits, and a lot of nice basslines, plus good, intelligent lyrics. The singing is slightly bad, but bad in a way that makes it really good. I don't know, I can't explain why I like this but I do. I really do. It's like Ska'n'Roll jazz music and that can only be a good thing, like a more serious version of SHOWBUSINESS GIANTS playing a game of doubles tennis with RANCID against the MIGHTY MIGHTY BOSSTONES and VOODOO GLOW SKULLS and winning by a lot. Plus their name is cool and sounds like a Japanese monster movie. *(DM)*
JUMP UP.

LADDERBACK, THE - "Trigger Themes" CD/ 39:13.
Fuck me, how good is this? The scary thing is that THE LADDERBACK's previous two albums have been highly impressive but "Trigger Themes" really takes things to a new level. They've always had this knack of being able to combine complete and utter chaos with the tightest order and sweetest riffs, but on here they do it with a whole new skill - one that will leave 'ordinary' musicians fidgeting and looking sheepish. The opening instrumental "Thieves in Saint's Clothes" sets the pace with rhythms resembling the death twitches of many bodies as the guitars find complex little hooks in amongst the drummer's mental powerhousing. "Shoestrings and Chainrings" has this incredibly crushing chorus with dual screamed vocals and then effortlessly slides into clean jangling guitars that are more akin to an early APPLESEED CAST album than the CONVERGE destruction of moments earlier. And then it's straight into one of the real highlights - "Landmark Repeating" with it's spaced keyboards, rocked-to-fuck riffs, screamed vocals and sublime moments of melodic clarity as respite. Rarely do records as chaotic sound so natural. This is very much a high quality album through and through. *(RR)*
BIFOCAL MEDIA, PO Box 50106, Raleigh, NC 27650-0106, USA.

LET IT BURN - "Here`s To Goodbyes" CD / 30:43.
Pretty mad, one day I get offered to put this lot on when they tour, the next day I get the CD to review. Enough of that. Does this band fucking rock or what? Plain and simple, yeah. Imagine if you will the last 7 SECONDS records with a touch of rock and roll thrown in for good measure. Really catchy sing-a-long punk rock done with class. Loads of cool rolling bass lines, and cheeky guitar breaks. I guess you could say they put a bit of TURBONEGRO into the mix whilst they were on, and boy does it work. I don`t really find myself listening to this sort of catchy hardcore/punk too much but this is a great combination of styles. I`ll even let them get away with the handclaps and tambourine action. Of course you get a few `woahs` in there to get you joining in. There`s a cover of `Saturday nights alright for fightin` chucked in for good measure which is pretty cool. Lyrically there`s lots of stuff which deals with relationships and also searching within yourself. Not exactly my cup of tea but done well and not in a sappy emo way. The graphics are good with garish colours and collage/cut n paste feel. This is the sort of band that whilst good on record would probably knock you for six live if they can pull it off. Another fine DIY record from the freaks at... *(FU)*
COALITION, Hugo de Grootstraat 25, 2518 EB, Den Haag, Netherlands.

LOGH - "Every Time a Bell Rings..." CD/ 34:26.
I'm not going to type out the full title because it's bad... I can only imagine that in their homeland of Sweden the whole "...an Angel Gets Its Wings" thing doesn't sound like something you'd get on a new-age christian greetings card. Mind you, in their homeland they are actually called LOG, which again has very different connotations over here. Semantics aside, I didn't dig the music much either. Very low-key pop with barren melodies that sound just too much like RADIOHEAD meandering off into slo-mo melodrama. Unlike the rest of the world I don't like RADIOHEAD. *(RR)*
DEEP ELM.

LOVE JUNK - "Vodatmour Blues" CD/ 13:21.
I've always liked this band, no-one else I know plays that REPLACEMENTS card so well these days. Their album from last year was great, but probably sold like shit cuz the kids don't get it.Their loss, as this band play high octane, alcohol fuelled rock & roll with sublime tunes and with a wreckless abandonment that so few bands have in this age of squeaky clean emo perfection rock. This 5 track EP showcases possibly their finest song "Ethan & Emma", this version has been knocking around since 1997, but it still sounds great and the two other originals are solid. Not too sure about the cover songs (Petty and Dylan), but this is a cool insight to a band that deserves a little more attention than they get. I haven't seen them play in years, that's a shame as they are a band who follow no trends and stick to their guns, that's something to be admired these days. Nice packaging too, so pick this up, and if you like what you hear then head straight for their album which is on Crackle! *(DS)*
IN AT THE DEEP END / www.inatthedeependrecords.co.uk

LRF - "The Roughs & the Smooths" CD/ 76:47.
This is a double CD of a Japanese skinhead / oi! band and let me tell you just how fucking laborious this was to get through. Slow, badly played and with awful lyrics to boot... I tried to play it again, just to remind myself of how bad it was, believe you me, it doesn't get better and I'm skipping through the 28 tracks unable to find anything of interest.. The singer is wearing a WEST HAM shirt on the cover photo and their thanks list is a real fucking treat including Stuart Pearce, Alan Shearer, The ROLLING STONES, Desmond Dekker right on through to MADNESS and SKREWDRIVER! If you are stupid then maybe buy this CD, it'll make you feel a damn sight smarter, truly awful... I refuse to keep it in the house. *(DS)*
REAL DEAL / D1Can10@aol.com

MAD SIN - "Survival of The Sickest!" CD/ 45:35.
A mean looking buncha dudes these, with their tats and big quiffs, knocking out beefy Psychobilly Rockers, aided on opening cut "Communication Breakdown" by Nick 13 of TIGER ARMY. It's all very slick, and does come across as just a bit too formulated. I can handle this musical style live sometimes, but on record it's harder to grab my attention. MAD SIN mostly doesn't. I was nodding off ¾ of the way through these 17 tracks. A not-too-bad cover of "Nothing's Alright", written by HANOI ROCKS singer Mike Monroe for his early Nineties outfit DEMOLITION 23. Guess they must be fans. *(PC)*
PEOPLE LIKE YOU.

MAN WILL DESTROY HIMSELF - "Consume... Be Silent... Die" CD/ 32:04.
I can`t get my head round this one. This seems to be into a lot of styles of punk and have tried to mix them together. I'm not cnvinced of the results though. Part of this comes off like BLACK FLAG which you`re thinking "that`s cool" but then they either swing into some whoah whaoh happy hardcore vocals or go for a crust MOTORHEAD sound!? Now this isn't right. Seems like they need to find a direction and go in it, where as, at the moment they`re trying to accommodate each band members influences. The song `the dead hand` sounds like SFA and then there`s `the exploder` which has a MINOR THREAT riff I swear. I Suppose if you`re into that whole Beer City thing you might get into this and also it sort of reminds me of STRYCHNINE. Doesn't do much for me, in fact it gets pretty annoying. *(FU)*
MWDH, 3028 Leonard Street, Raleigh, NC 27607, U$A.

MANIFESTO JUKEBOX - "Desire" LP.
I was telling Aston the BT man last week about how I could never get into the MANIFESTO JUKEBOX CD, how everyone seemed to love it and I just didn't get it at all. Well, 3 days later I get this to review!! The full colour picture disc vinyl, which I assume is limited edition??? Anyway, I think it sounds better on vinyl, I still find myself unimpressed by the music on offer, it's a mix of LEATHERFACE, HUSKER DU, MOVING TARGETS and a few other bands that you can detect in the sound. I just find it a little too derivative at times, but there's no doubt they write some strong songs and play them with passion. A lot of folks will disagree with me on this review as I know they're a popular band. When it comes to hard-edged melodic punk rock you could do a lot worse than this. *(DS)*
BOSS TUNEAGE, PO Box 74, Sandy, SG19 2WB, UK.

MASS, THE - Self Titled CD/ 25:34.
Bit of an odd band this, and somewhat schizophrenic too. Across these five nicely named tracks ("Rack of Lamb of God" and "Mostly Michael Schenker" being the highlights) they flirt with the likes of OXES, FANTOMAS (yes, the whole Patton 'vocals as noises' thing), SWEEP THE LEG JOHNNY (yes, the whole 'crazy sax over jazz-hardcore' thing), MELVINS (metal, yes, but is it ironic or post-ironic?) and a host of others that mine this rich vein of sonic terrorism. And the problem is that THE MASS come out of the whole affair with a tentacle stuck to each of their peers but their body wedged firmly in the no-man's-land between them all. The record just doesn't work as a whole since all the flitting between bases leaves it lacking it any kind of cohesion - but maybe that's their intention. Find your niche, then mine it. *(RR)*
WHOLE ENCHILADA, PO Box 16158, Oakland, CA 94610, USA.

MATT SKIBA and KEVIN SECONDS - Split CD/ 27:33.
OK, so here's the deal... I love the songwriting and studio output of ALKALINE TRIO. 7 SECONDS are an all time favourite band of mine, so influential and inspiring (I've loved all of Kevin's projects, band and solo) and I love acoustic punk rock songs too... so where's the problem? Well, the fact that this isn't a 74 minute CD is my biggest problem, these 10 songs are so enjoyable that I want it to last forever. The Kevin Seconds material just sounds like 7 SECONDS minus the hardcore. Rushed melodies and a style which is unique to say the least. There's no mistaking it's the 7 SECONDS mainman. Matt Skiba's songs are a little more organic, it sounds (and probably is) the sound that the rough ALKALINE TRIO demos have, ideas banged out with an acoustic guitar and minimal backing. As you listen to these songs you can instantly imagine how the finished product is going to sound. He also covers an old 7 SECONDS song and retains the emotion that the original possessed. If you like either of these guy's main projects then you'll get something from this, it's one of the coolest records I've heard this year, the contrasting styles of both musicians is what makes this so enjoyable. With the facts being that AT only get to play huge impersonal shows here in the UK and 7 SECONDS are destined to never come over... I'll settle for this. Excellent. *(DS)*
ASIAN MAN, PO Box 35585, Monte Sereno, CA 95030, USA.

MAVIS - "The Mavis Crisis" CD/ 32:07.
This is great, it has a real early 90's indie rock feel to it, think LEMONHEADS, MIDWAY STILL and Australia's SMUDGE. Non-distorted, almost folky guitar led, with good vocals and some superb female accompaniment that enhances the songs and gives the band that extra dimension you need when playing this style of music. There's snippets of lyrics and they are fantastic, I wish I had them all... it would have enhanced the album even further for me. There is one song that had a strange, almost CRAMPS quality to it, it really did seem out of place. *"I wanted to give her painkillers and strawberries, when all I could offer her was Quorn mince and tinned carrots"*. Pure genius, produced by Frankie Stubbs. Yeah, I like this a lot, it has charm, personality and makes a refreshing change from all those British emo bands who all sound the same. Shame about the terrible name and the crappy artwork... I almost *"lost"* this down the back of the couch, as it looked so bad! Never trust a book by its cover, eh? Not unless it has breasts on the cover and is called "Big Tit Action" - I think that'd probably be a safe bet. OK, I'll shut the fuck up, hear this band, they're pretty cool. *(DS)*
On_the_door@hotmail.com

MERCURY TILT SWITCH - "Brundle Kid" CD/ 33:38.
I listened to this CD a few times and blindly assumed it was some pretty good American band I'd never heard of before. Well, it did sound American and there's photos of San Francisco strewn across the sleeve. But on closer inspection I was amused to see that they're actually from Dundee and I've still never heard of them. Seems they've been operating outside of the punk scene as their website was full of references to mainstream(ish) media sources, local festival appearances and links to mainly indie/alternative bands with nary a nod to the existence of the massive UK punk/hc scene. Oh well, no bad thing, maybe they'll not be so jaded because of it. It's a shame though because they really should be more well known as "Brundle Kid" is really pretty damn good. It's in that sort of SAMIAM vein (so with the UK connection, it reminds me of SOUTHPAW) with a little DUGONG thrown in, but with a little more rock and jangly guitars in amongst the driving choruses and strong vocals. The songs are well constructed, tightly played and aided by a sharp production job. MTS are clearly happy to take the DIY route since this album is self-released, and not only that, every song is available to download from their website (www.mtsonline.co.uk) so it would be cool to see them playing more DIY gigs and getting the attention they probably deserve. *(RR)*
PET PIRANHA, PO Box 6848, Dundee, DD1 4YX, UK.

MERCY SUITE, THE - "Credis Quod Habes et Habes" CD/ 13:40
It means "what you believe is real, is real" by the way, in case you skipped those all-important Latin lessons at school. So I suppose it's like if you think THE MERCY SUITE are great, they are great (likewise, if you think they're shit then... but let's not bother with that fruitless avenue) and whichever way you want to philosophically look at it, they actually are great. TMS is two ex-members of DROPNOSE and one ex-ASTREAM and to be honest, this picks up just about where DROPNOSE left off but with a much more direct and infectious approach than before. Their songs blast from the speakers at a frantic pace, with the hooks already embedded in the gritty guitar riffs and Iz's distinctive emotional vocals hollering over the top. These six tracks seem to be over before you know it and it's not until the third or fourth listen that the intricacies hidden in TMS's fast rhythms and packed melodies really start to shine through. Also worthy of note is the excellent production giving this the power and edge it really deserves and great artwork (amusingly with one band member as a white BA Baracus). Quality record... but you'd expect nothing less from Bombed Out. *(RR)*
BOMBED OUT, PO Box 17, Leeds, W.Yorks., LS8 1UP, UK.

MERDA - "Curticao Dos Jouens!" CD/ 25:02.
A full length outing this time round. The last thing I heard was the split with HELLNATION. As before this is pretty mixed, with some bits traditional punk but mostly going for harsh thrash with an emphasis on the bass. I don`t know what to make of them in all honesty, there`s 26 songs all of which are less than two minutes long and sung in Brazilian with the exception of `Satans Barbie` and `I love Japanese Bands`. The words to 'Satans Barbie' are in English and it`s on about drugs, the number 666 and sticking a Barbie doll up some-ones arse! The insert is a mad collection of cut and paste insanity from the minds of some twisted people, which doesn't give me much to work with. Some hilarious pictures though. Does the word MERDA translate as Shit? I think it does and in which case they get extra points for the cover of a woman drinking a bottle of coke with their name in the Coke writing. Nice. If it`s just going on the music alone I would pass this up as it doesn't really stick out from the bunch. Great to see bands coming through from other countries though. *(FU)*
LAJA, Caixa Postal 25519 - V.Velha / Es Ceo 29102-973, Brazil.

METROPHON - Self Titled CD/ 20:48.
Woah, this is pretty crazy, I can't really describe what this is. Track one starts as a kind of hyperactive garage/punk/lo-fi thing of a song before it descends and degrades itself into a filthy mess of feedback and squelchy howls of (possibly) electronics. Track two is a good builder of a song with a semi-restrained feel but also a certain unrelenting energy to it. I guess this is quite SONIC YOUTH-y at points. Track three 'Belgian Waffles' reminds me of a more insane REFUSED if they went even more experimental than they did on 'that' album and took loads of mushrooms in the studio. We got organs, drum machines, samples AND a rock band all mixed together. Ok, hardly revolutionary but these guys do it really fucking well. Damn, this was recorded in 2001, only now it's got a release! Hm. *(JD)*
THE COMPANY WITH THE GOLDEN ARM.

MIDNIGHT THUNDER EXPRESS - Self Titled CD/ 43:26.
Looks like Empty's ridiculous legal wrangles have been resolved with the defining addition of two letters after their name. And thank fuck, because now they can get back to releasing more great dirty music like MTE. And if I told you with a name like that, and an opening gambit entitled "Ace Up My Sleeve", do I really need to describe the music? Yep, rock 'n' roll, with all the sneer of young smalltown punks and all the swagger of big city rockers. Like early STONES with a little MC5 and for our younger brethren let's say THE DRAGONS with THE NEW BOMB TURKS and a bucket of soul to go. The three tracks with the piano accompaniment really stand out as the highlights and it's a shame that this ivory-tinkling Chuck Berry meister couldn't have contributed to the whole album because it really gives MTE a booty-shaking edge. I bet they all sweat and drink and smoke (maybe even womanize too). *(RR)*
EMPTY US, PO Box 12034, Seattle, WA 98012, USA.

MINDJUICE - "Practice Dying Every Day" CD/ 44:45.
Ok so what`s the idea, sending me fucking promo CD`s?? I hate promo CD`s. it`s ok though as I get a bio and a lovely photo to look at instead of the real packaging. I always laugh my arse off at bio sheets, I mean it`s not like the label is going to say it`s a shit record and instead they make it sound like the most amazing thing to be recorded since time began. Strangely enough this isn't. Apparently this lot held this Cd back a year to wait for the right singer. Well they did`nt look very hard. He`s good but not that great. Basically if you like bands such as HELMET, 16 and CLUTCH you might get on with this as I have to admit it`s fairly decently played stuff but it`s hardly the most mind blowing thing you'll hear this year. They`ve got some great heavy riffs and obviously know how to construct a song but there`s no feeling of real passion to it. The singer does`nt seem pissed off enough and the music does`nt reek of despair, and seeing as I don`t get any lyrics or other info I'm stuck as to knowing what they`re getting at. Oh yeah and I kept thinking later period PANTERA. In case no ones pointed out the obvious to these lads - you should change your band name. Please don`t kill me, as you all look terribly hard and could well be a UK band I might bump into at some point. *(FU)*
LOUDSPEAKER.

MINOR TIMES, THE - "Chris Chambers Never Misses" CD/ 24:24.
If you ever liked GUILT or JUDAS FACTOR then you'll dig THE MINOR TIMES. They go for that same enormous, churning sound with screamy vocals that sometimes suit the music and sometimes sound a little too distant or random. Having said that this CD is one to be patient with, as its driving, cascading bass and guitar lines really start to eat at you after a few listens. I think this will impress many followers of the Hydra Head Records roster also. *(SM)*
HEX, 201 Maple Lane, North Syracuse, NY 13212, USA.

MOOZ - "The Wheel that Squeaks the Loudest is the One..." CD/ 46:25.
Four women, haunting vocals, a cello, guitars, drums, clarinet, glass rims, horns and who knows what more - you would not call them unadventurous! A typically atypical Sink and Stove release : experimental, atmospheric and soothing with hints of funky breakbeats among the eclectic range of sounds. *(HE)*
SINK AND STOVE, PO Box 992, Bristol, BS99 3ZL, UK.

MUDHONEY - "Since We've Become Translucent" CD/ 46:40.
I think MUDHONEY have been reading their "How to Piss off Monk Dave" handbook which clearly states that if you put a slow, dull, instrumental "intro" at the beginning of your album, his attention will wane faster than a bat outta hell. Anyway, this is very "hmmm..." You see I loved MUDHONEY as a kid. I was one of those 6th form losers who used to play 'In and Out of Grace' on the common room tape player, while thinking I was *seriously* fucking alternative. I also had the worst Morrissey influenced hair-do you can imagine and, together with my black Dr Marten boots, black jeans and sweet MY BLOODY VALENTINE t-shirt I was the bees fucking knees of Lower 6th Cardiff High... haha... yeah, right. Anyway, I loved that band. They were slacker rock done right. They were the soundtrack to dope smoking your summer holidays away in the woods and sneaking, under age, into The Square Club down by Cardiff Central Bus Station (that place is long gone now, damn), and they hold a lot of fond memories for me. So when I heard they'd done a new record, I jumped at the chance to hear it. And I have to say, no matter how their much their UK press agent has pushed me into liking this (no longer do they use gentle persuasion, those guys hold a fuckin' knife to your throat nowadays!) it just isn't doing it for me. Not only is it generally too slow, they have now decided to adopt a horn section which gives them a real ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT sound. No bad thing, but it just doesn't cut the mustard I'm afraid. I still think this will appeal to the "slacker hipsters" of 2002, and if there's any justice in the world, MUDHONEY would be crankin' out the rock on a stage headlinging OVER all those fucking hip garage bands like The STROKES, The HIVES, etc. because these guys have been around for over 10 years (more like 15 I guess) and they're the real fucking deal for sure. For me though, they're just a 6th form memory and I think I'd be quite happy for them to remain that way. *(MD)*
SUB POP (surrender on demand, indeed!)

MUKEKA DI RATO - "Gaiola" CD/ 21:54.
One word - INCREDIBLE and a whole lot more. Just think of LIFE'S HALT, VITAMIN X, WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?, GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS etc, etc. 16 songs of fast, raw (excellent quality), unadultered hardcore. Seek this out. If it was on 625 everyone would be creaming over it. *(MH)*
LAJA, CAIXA Postal 25519, Vka Velha/Es Cep: 29102-973, Brazil.

MUKEKA DI RATO - "Pasqualin Na Terra Do Xupa-Kabra" CD/ 32:29.
Raging old school hardcore here from Brazil. I don't know what these guys are singing about as it's in Brazillian but whatever it is they sound pissed off! With catchy shout-a-long bits, an array of musical styles implemented to make it different from just straight up play and scream bands, and a sound that makes me think of what BLACK FLAG would have sounded like if they'd played DEAD KENNEDYS songs, I really love this CD, it's passionate, it's interesting and it is punk fucking rock for sure! *(DM)*
LAJA RECORDS, Caixa Postal 25519, Vila Velha, ES CEP, 29102-973, Brazil

MURPHY'S LAW / JETSEX - Split 7".
Haven't heard MURPHY'S LAW in years and to be honest I was never what you call a fan of them, but I really like this song. It's fast with a hardcore punch, but with lots of melody ala H20, no lyrics or anything, but knowing these guys it's probably something silly. On the flip, JETSEX start with an amazing intro of metallic riff and then blast out some rocking hardcore. Their song is on par with their label mates. Pretty cool 7". *(MH)*
SOUL FREQUENCY, www.soulfrequencyrecords.com

MY AWESOME COMPILATION - "Sounds for Entrances" CD/ 13:13.
This is actually a CD-R but it's well packaged and recorded (and I'm feeling generous) so I'll put it in the 'proper release' review section. I was also prompted because musically it's very well done. The last MY AWESOME COMPILATION record was sounding pretty good but these three new tracks really show them finding their sound and playing it to a tee. This is melodic indie-rock with a fine intuition for when to take it down to melancholic and brooding moments and likewise when to turn up the pop hooks and hit the harmonies. An obvious comparison would be to JIMMY EAT WORLD, but whatever, I still like that band no matter how much of suburban middle-American does too. Their second track in particular hits the mark with some sweet build-ups and a layered chorus to kill for. As much I still hate their name, I hope MY AWESOME COMPILATION stick at it and keep delivering the tune-crammed rock for a goodly while yet. *(RR)*
myawesomecompilation.cjb.net

MY FAVORITE CHORD - "Red Eyed Reality" CD/ 19:10.
I know the feeling, 4:30am and I'm writing this, red-eyed reality indeed. Another decent band playing the whole SAMIAM / GET UP KIDS / SAVES THE DAY melodic rock thing but this time from Germany, and if there's one fault, it's that there's quite a German accent to the English vocals. I sometimes wish that more bands like this would sing in their native languages, not only would it prevent the whole accent situation occurring but would probably set them aside from their peers too. Ah well, I guess the Anglicization of punk rock is here to stay. Asides from that MFC have everything in the right places; big hooks, driving rhythms, cutting guitar lines, singalong choruses (apart from the one in "Cold Comfort" which has an awkward out of time rhythm thing going on...) and plenty of back-up harmonies. You'll know by know if you need to hear this... *(RR)*
ASS CARD, Fritz Piontek, Annenstr. 5, 44137 Dortmund, Germany.

NARCOSIS - "Heart Slows Down" LP.
Hah, I'm glad to have this record! After seeing them live a couple of times it seems they've captured their insane barrage of blasts and Sabbath-like grooves on to vinyl rather nicely thank you very much. With Peet on vocals (formerly of UNDERCLASS and HARD TO SWALLOW) you know this has got to be good. To me, Narcosis are kind of carrying on the legacy that HTS left behind but without sounding like them in any blatant way. The technical edge that they have over the sheer blast-hardcore is something you have to witness live and definately takes them beyond possible HTS comparisons. The groove that some of these songs has is undeniable and brings to mind the best parts of EYEHATEGOD, CAVITY and CATHEDRAL (and not just because their drummer looks like a mid-nineties Lee Dorian!). Song titles like '50% Sheep, 50% Leech/100% Human', 'X Marks The Shit' and 'Whore's Eye' tells you that there is some really heavy shit going on here especially with side B's only song, 'With a Sickening Thud'. It starts with an epic and driving riff complimented with growls of despair and hate, before it's insanely dischordant climax and buzzsaw frequency attack. *(JD)*
BALOWSKI, Haarweg 287, 6709 RX Wageningen, The Netherlands.

NATION BLUE, THE - "A Blueprint For Modern Noise" CD/ 57:07.
This fucking rocks. Starting with a track that reminds me of the kind of heavy dischordancies that someone like HARKONEN or ISIS might show us, THE NATION BLUE, from Richmond, Australia, finally prove that there is quality hardcore from the land that brought us Kylie. As well as chaotic heaviness these guys have an almost, and I mean *almost* emo edge to their sound. Soulful guitar pickings rub shoulders here with a couple of guys that can scream their bollocks off and sing with great passion. The song 'The Nation Encourages Participation' is one of the most driving and swinging songs I've heard in ages. Check out the lyrics from 'I'm So Primitive' - "Alpha move above the tree line or burn in Fire. Cro Magnon, no opposable thumb. Patterns on walls shed shapes on floors." Apart from BLOODDUSTER and a band I saw in a Melbourne squat called VAGINAL CARNAGE these guys are one of the only heavy, hardcore bands I've heard from Oz. Thank god they're as good as this! Ripper! *(JD)*
TRIAL AND ERROR Po Box 391 Richmond 3121, Australia.
www.trialanderror.com

NATIONALE BLUE, THE - "A Different Kind of Listening" CD/ 70:00.
Not to be confused with Australia's The Nation Blue, this Boston three piece have an album here that treads many a different board in the musicality stakes. Opening tracks 'Loop Transversion' and 'Silver Alien Pyjamas In II Movements' give us eight minutes of experimental and instrumental rock. The electronic beats/pulsings and ambient washes of delayed guitar slowly draws the listener in to the album before the vocals come into play on track three. Then these guys then take on a more post-rock sound with the quirky-ish vocals of Dave Altman and Reuben Bettsak. Think a bit of SONIC YOUTH meets SLINT perhaps and chuck in some of the spaceyness of... HAWKWIND? Well ok, not really *Hawkwind* but hopefully you know what I mean. The few more instrumentals really break up the album which provides a nice sense of space and depth to the band. The liner notes also prove that this was recorded at a few different times and places, one of them being at they're rehearsal room and the other at Godcity studios in Boston with CONVERGE's Kurt Ballou twiddling the knobs. All in all this is a great release with some great packaging too. *(JD)*
IODINE, 1085 Commonwealth Avenue, PMB 318, Boston, MA 02215, USA.
www.iodinerecordings.com

NEAR MISS - "The Gentle Art of Making Enemies" CD/ 40:24.
It's albums like this that make the job of reviewing worth all the shite you are forced to listen to in the quest to find the diamonds amongst the rough, and this gem of an album is certainly a diamond to me and a nice reward for listening to some of the other gash I have been sent this issue. Soaring vocals and searing guitars make this well produced, fabulously harmony riddled melodic hardcore release a piece of punk rock genius from beginning to end. Sounding like what NO USE FOR A NAME would have sounded like if they had more than one idea, hadn't started sucking and had instead decided to play interesting and fast brutal music that you can't help but jump around to while still retaining the catchy hooks on both vocals and guitar and adding interesting bass lines. For some reason the phrase "a hardcore TEEN IDOLS" also springs to mind. This album is fuckin'-A! *(DM)*
FEARLESS, 13772 Goldenwest St #545, Westminster, CA, 92683, USA.
www.fearlessrecords.com

NERF HERDER - "American Cheese" CD/ 34:43.
Wow, a real return to form for these guys after the abysmal EP they put out a year or so ago. Super-slick and melodic punk rock, with new wave flashes and self-deprecating lyrics about being a loser on every level. OK, so it pales in comparison to their debut album which is a classic, but it more than matches the last album and on tracks such as "Jacket", "New wave girls" and "Welcome to my world" they are at their very best, lyrically and musically. This is a fun, upbeat album and there's even a lyric for the singer of SCUTTLE: *"and she didn't go off with Steve, not the cougar, not the cougar"*. A fun album, I think that's the point, ya know? *(DS)*
HONEST DON'S, PO Box 192027, San Francisco, CA 94119-2027, USA.

NEUROTIC SWINGERS - "What's Your Definition of Underground?" CD/ 18:41.
Nice 'n' dirty rock and roll punk rock fuelled on a diet of JD and Camel cigarettes I'm sure. So many bands attempt this style and fail miserably. Songwriting, musicianship and attitude... these guys have the complete package and more. The songs are catchy, there's some superb lead guitar work and it sounds great on every level. They don't really sound like the NEW BOMB TURKS circa "Destroy! -Oh boy" but they have that attitude, maybe with a little NYC 77 style in there too. As I said, there's a lot of bands, world over, who are playing this style, not many as well as these French dogs. *(DS)*
LOLLIPOP, 7 Imp. Monsegur, 13016, Marseille, France.

NEW AMSTERDAMS, THE - "Para Toda Vida" CD/ 28:20.
THE NEW AMSTERDAMS have taken the GET UP KIDS' spread of wings to another level. Matthew Pryor, vocalist/guitarist from the KIDS, wears his heart on his sleeve in this acoustic side project. The songs are folksy with titles like "My Old Man Had a Pistol" and "Son of a Prophet" and the songs are spacious and lonely with the odd harmonica and banjo. The emotional depth is vast and it doesn't sound two million miles away from DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL, but really it's just THE GET UP KIDS unplugged. *(HE)*
VAGRANT / HEROES & VILLAINS.

NEW NOISE PROJECT - "The Difficulty of Definition" CD/ 42:06.
I had NNP pegged as some bad REFUSED wannabes and I think with a name like I was justified, but nay, as is frequent, I've been misled again because NNP are actually a solid melodic rock band from Germany who manage to rise above the direct and indeed obvious SAMIAM and GET UP KIDS references by warrant of the fact that they occasionally lift their rock into screaming territory as the vocalist escalates the emotion to breaking point and into a rockier BOY SETS FIRE zone. It seems that every now and again, records of this genre come along that just seem to have that extra ounce of grit or polished layer of melodies that allows them to stand out a little (DIVISION, EVEREST and THE TIE THAT BINDS are others that have occupied this exalted position lately). And for now NNP are welcome to take those honours because as straight-up melodic rock as "The Difficulty of Definition" is, I can't help myself liking it a lot and nodding along to their infectious rhythms. *(RR)*
DEAD SERIOUS, Helenenanage 3, 66299 Friedrichsthal, Germany.

NEWTOWN GRUNTS, THE - "Disgruntled" CD/ 40:08.
Possibly the finest NEWTOWN GRUNTS release based on what I've heard by them. They seem to have moved on a bit from the total Ska/Punk thing that everyone seems to have them labelled with and gone for a far more Punk sound on some songs. That said, they've certainly not left the Ska sound behind and even a folky ballad or two appears. The lyrics are excellent as well, there's a mixture of political and social observations with my favourite being 'Conspiracy' which is a song about arseholes like ROY 'CHUBBY' BROWN and JEFFEREY ARCHER. A great CD which has unfortunately suffered from a rushed and consequently poor review here but I urge you to seek it out. You'll not be disappointed. The ANGELIC UPSTARTS cover 'Solidarity' is pretty good as well. *(GS)*
FJ RECORDS / www.grunts.freeuk.com

NICOTINE - "Samurai Shot" CD/ 70:32.
The press release with this CD calls these guys "NOFX style punk rock" but in my opinion that is totally short-selling this fantastic Japanese band because these guys are no mere NOFX clones. They sound more like NOFX at a hardcore show refereeing a boxing match between PENNYWISE and BAD RELIGION (with the winner getting the rights to being the true BAD RELIGION of punk rock!) mixing intricate vocal harmonies with fast punk songs with a great overall sound that, while definitely giving nods towards some blatant Epitaph influences, gives these guys an edge all of their own, and with 25 songs this 70 minute CD is full to bursting with good stuff that is well worth a listen. *(DM)*
ASIAN MAN, PO Box 35585, Monte Sereno, CA 95030, USA.

NO CHOICE - "Try and You Might... Don't and You Certainly Won't!" CD/ 73:09.
This little known Welsh band have been around since 1982, first coming to people's attention with the "Sadist Dream" 7" released back in the early 80's on the Riot City label. That single contained the classic "Cream of the Crop" track which I loved as a kid, but the band didn't release anything more than a couple of tracks on a compilation album that came out in 1984. Like so many bands from that era, they seemed to disappear as punk rock lost its momentum and no more was heard. They did split up, but after a period of time they got back together under the moniker of S.A.N.D. and started writing and playing again. The sound had changed somewhat, with a contemporary edge and better production, in fact those songs are highly tuneful affairs, this material may be from 1992, but it still sounds very good. In fact, I would say that most people would prefer these tracks to the earlier material, the lyrics had improved ten-fold and the band's poppier edge definitely worked in their favour. I don't know how many of you would have any interest in this band, but here we are in 2002, 20 years since they formed and they are still going. Back under the NO CHOICE banner, they have a brand new CD coming out on Monk Dave's Newest Industry label and these songs are their best yet. Hats off to these guys for sticking it out, it appears to have paid dividends at last. Wow, what a blast from the past and a highly enjoyable one at that. Nice artwork and booklet construction from Welly too. *(DS)*
GRAND THEFT AUDIO, 501 W. Glenoaks Blvd, Suite 313, Glendale, CA 91202, USA.

NO USE FOR A NAME - "Hard Rock Bottom" CD/ 34:29.
Oh dear... I used to love this band, but this album sounds like twelve versions of the exact same song with a random Sinead O'Connor cover thrown in sang by Karina Denike to try and throw you off the track. Did I mention that the song of which there seem to be twelve versions is pretty much a generic NUFAN by numbers ditty, and did I mention that while it is an interesting and mildly entertaining song that could have been good if it was a one off, hearing so many similar versions of it gets kind of dull after a while. Did I also mention that the production has managed to turn the guitars into what can only be described as merely an annoying background buzz that don't in any way rock at all? And did I mention that this album is just so disappointing and uninspired? If I didn't mention all that then I apologise because it's my duty as reviewer to mention these things and ensure you don't waste your money on wank you could do without. *(DM)*
FAT WRECK CHORDS.

NOFX - "45 or 46 Songs That Weren't Good Enough..." 2 x CD/ 49:17 + 22:05.
By my estimations, all these songs could have gone on one CD, but then this is NOFX so a big package is fine by me. Anyway, I really don't need to say too much here, as I'm sure you, along with another quarter of a million kids have already bought this and were rocking out to it months ago. Anyway, this is basically loads of comp tracks, seven inches, old tracks, outtakes, covers, etc. etc. that just go to show that NOFX were, and still are head and shoulders about the six billion NOFX clones out there. They're the real deal, how can you top that? And sure, this "sound" may not be the big trend at the moment, but you liked it 5 years ago, huh? And if you just got your head out of your ass for five minutes, maybe you'll realise that you still like it... See how I lose my train of thought like a senile old bastard? Jeez! Anyway, this package is worth it for the booklet alone, as it's a really neat companion to the music that has explanations for almost every song on the album, and all of them are interesting and funny. Especially the pic of the guy who crashed his car on acid, haha... *(MD)*
FAT WRECK CHORDS, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119, USA.

NORFOLK & WESTERN - "Winter Farewell" CD/ 41:19.
Norfolk sounds so romantic in the American context of the Norfolk & Western railroad. If you think of blurry brown photos of steam locomotives carrying coal across ancient states then you have an image in your mind to match the moody empire-building sound of NORFOLK &

WESTERN. Definitely a winter album, its ironic to review this in the heat of the summer when the days are longest - this CD deserves a dark extended moment of peace after all. Fans of PALACE BROTHERS or other Will Oldham projects will appreciate the rootsy country feel of all 16 songs - along with banjo and harmonica appearances - while fans of RACHEL'S will love the effects of atmosphere, organs, vibraphone, cello. One to get lost in. *(HE)*
FILM GUERRERO, PO Box 14414, Portland, OR 97293-5162, USA.

NOTHING TO PROVE - "Erase The Metronome" CD/ 16:47.
Ok, this is pretty good to sometimes average metal/noise core from Strasbourg. Packaged in a very luxurious digi-pak with very contemporary graphic design, I was kind of expecting to hear something that is as musically contemporary and challenging. Instead I was a tad let down to hear the kind of barking vocalist, mid-paced chuggs and dischordant chords that fail to hold them in higher stead than any other metal core band. Not that exciting. (JD)
IMPURE MUSIK / www.impuremusik.com/impuremusik

ONELINEDRAWING - "Visitor" CD/ 37:04.
Never been much of a fan of OLD to be honest and this record doesn't do much to change that. It just always seems so fucking sappy and overly emotional, in a rather sugary way. The acoustic songs aren't actually that bad but, as Beavis would probably say, "whoah, back off and stop whispering in my ear dude!". It's almost like Jonah is sitting next to you, like right next to you, warbling away and never getting above a breathy whisper as he strums his guitar and looks doe-eyed. I actually quite liked NEW END ORIGINAL when they played the rock that didn't sound like OLD. But for the acoustic record, KEVIN DEVINE still takes honours and for that matter I prefer his band THE MIRACLE OF 86 to any of Jonah's bands too. I'm digressing, I'll stop. *(RR)*
JADE TREE.

ORANGE ISLAND - "Everything You Thought You Knew" CD/ 39:29.
Look, I'm sorry, but this is about the tenth record I've reviewed this issue that I'm having to compare to the GET UP KIDS and it's not because I'm a lazy reviewer. Can we just get over this thing? I was actually a little disappointed with ORANGE ISLAND because the other record I reviewed on Iodine this issue (GREGOR SAMSA) was highly innovative but this one just treads well-worn boards. And as is often the case, ORANGE ISLAND are actually a very good band that I have happily listened to quite a few times but come judgement day they have nothing new to offer to my jaded ears. That said, as I listen to it again now, I'm enjoying it a lot. The choruses are already familiar, it powers along with bags of energy and the decent lyrics are delivered with passion and confidence. Then again, in half an hour's time, this will be back on the shelf and my enthusiasm for it will already have waned. *(RR)*
IODINE, 1085 Commonwealth Avenue, PMB 318, Boston, MA 02215, USA.

ORGANIC - "The Life And Times Of Sal Sagev" CD/ 70:39.
This album is a real shame. I say that because the music these guys do…old school punk rock at it's best…is really good, but as this CD is like a compilation of old, stuff, new stuff, live stuff and rare stuff it is jut way too fucking long and so what starts off as a cool release eventually starts dragging and losing your interest. Also, because the chronology is backwards, and it starts with the good new stuff then goes backwards into the band's past, the quality of the songs lessen as the CD goes on giving you even less incentive to carry on listening. Like I said, it's a shame because the stuff is good, especially the new songs, but this release makes the old songs look sub standard in comparison and make the listener want to cry in desperation at how it just goes on and on and on… *(DM)*
BOSS TUNEAGE.

ORGANIC - "The Life and Times of Sal Sagev" CD/ 70:39.
...what Dan McKee actually meant to say was that ORGANIC sound remarkably like CRIMPSHRINE, and CRIMPSHRINE were fucking ace, and this is way better than all the watered-down over-polished punk rock shit we get served up everyday. He just forgot, that's all, but he's a great bloke. *(RR)*
BOSS TUNEAGE, PO Box 74, Sandy, SG19 2WB, UK.

ORIGINAL SINNERS - Self Titled CD/ 32:55.
These folks must be big on the Mike Ness bluesy / country tinged punk trip. My mum would probably love this. Exene Cervenka (X, AUNTIE CHRIST) is the main songwriter, with I'm sure, some other cool LA dudes (is that a review?) *(MH)*
NITRO.

OS PEDERERO - "Hardrock Dreams" CD/ 26:24.
This reminds me of the rather excellent DANGERFIELDS from Belfast, who some of you may have seen playing on mainland UK. OS PEDRERO do a cool fusion of SCREECHING WEASLE, NOFX, GREEN DAY, QUEERS, etc. kind of combo. It's fast, catchy excellent quality and I find it more appealing that some yank band that has churned out 5 CD's of the same sounding stuff. Fun lyrics help it go the whole way down. *(MH)*
LAJA , CAIXA Postal 25519, Vka Velha/Es Cep: 29102-973, Brazil.

OSWEGO - Self Titled CD/ 38:21.
OSWEGO feature members of KEROSENE 454 and MOST SECRET METHOD. Showing their DC kudos links this CD was also recorded by J Robbins at Inner Ear Studios. Though there's elements of KARATE and FUGAZI gathered in bundles in the intricate and original songs featured here, it just didn't grab me overall. I believe OSWEGO are no more, but fans of the above and slower DC bands like SMART WENT CRAZY may like to pick this up. *(HE)*
B-CORE, Apdo. Co. 35221, 08080 Barcelona, Spain.

OUBLIETTE, THE - "Scarlet Mutations" CD/ 17:07.
A super-cute little 3" CD housed in a mini jewel case. Sure, it'll fuck up my neat CD filing system but... uh, actually, I don't have a filing system, it's all a bit ramshackle. But in the pile that roughly resembles review items, THE OUBLIETTE CD has been floating around near the top because it's such a nice disc. THE OUBLIETTE is Penny from AFRAID OF THE DARK's solo project and since they're a good band, you'd sort of expect that this will be good too. The occasional addition of a keyboard along with the voice and guitar really build up the sound well, and when Penny harmonises with herself it really layers the sound well. Obvious comparisons would be towards KRISTIN HERSCH and TANYA DONNELLY but a far more obscure one would be the recordings that PIP COLLINGS made with ROBB JOHNSON. But enough extraneous reference points to mislead you with, let's just say if you want to hear heartfelt, sweet acoustic music, then this little disc is going to serve you well. *(RR)*
www.theoubliette.cjb.net

OUTBREAK - "A Part Of This Machinery" CD/ 24:16.
OUTBREAK play rocky hardcore with frantic REFUSED style vocals, driving riffs and loads of energy but while still managing to sound quite moody. Sort of like SNAPCASE if they really let their hair down and partied hard. Lyrics are about friendship, unity and the anticipation that builds up before playing live. Sounds like these guys are having a lot of fun. *(SM)*
ROCKSTAR, Verbindungsstrasse 9, 52080 Aachen, Germany.

OVERRIDE - "Not A Game" CD/ 24:48.
This sounds like a lot of bands I don't like. PITCHSHIFTER, PULKAS, LIBERTY 37, that type of stuff. It's from Greece, it's a CDR but has been very well packaged. Other parts remind me of PANTERA, last album FUDGE TUNNEL, and ALICE IN CHAINS in some of the vocals, and they've got a neat little reggae intro on the last track, and some innovative little guitar tweaks dotted about the place, but it just all sounds rather flat and claustrophobic to me. Good luck to 'em anyways though. *(SM)*
MANTHOS STERGIOU, Livisiou 33, N Makri, TK 19005, Attiki, Greece.

OZMA - "Korobeiniki" 7".
Hey, get ready for the hopeful next big thing! WEEZER-lite rock from a band who grate on my nerves on an unbelievable level. I told Monk Dave *"Don't send me that OZMA CD for review as I hate 'em!"*. Didn't know there was a 7" out as well, bugger. What can I say? If there is a hell, and there is a horse down there with a hairy cock, then these guys suck it big time. Weak keyboard pop by professional musicians who worship at the altar of Rivers Cuomo, it's pathetic and I pray to my little god that lives under the sink that these guys don't *"make it"* because if they do, then I am bailing on this rock & roll trip. Insipid, limp-wristed and nothing-ness from arse to fanny. Ooh, I could pop a balloon (that is "pop" and not *"poop"*). *(DS)*
FALSETTO / www.falsettorecords.com

OZMA - "The Doubble Donkey Disc" CD/ 40:09.
Wow, DS already used "limp-wristed" so I guess I'm not allowed to say that about this outrageously dull Californian REGGIE & THE FULL EFFECT rip off band. Tediously useless, mind numbingly sleep inducing and duller than that Kerrang! cover shot of that bearded asshole from WEEZER, this is OZMA at their best. I hate this so much I just puked all over my cat Chap. He didn't deserve it of course, but when you're in the way... Help me someone. *(MD)*
KUNG FU, PO Box 38009, Hollywood, CA 90038, USA.

PAINT THE TOWN RED - "Last Gang In Town" CD/ 16:30.
Cool, I like the band name already, I second that notion! These guys play some pretty heavy hardcore that reminds me of the kind of riffing and vocals you might expect from STRIFE or someone. In fact this guy screams like a new school Roger Miret. This is pretty cool and the album's opening sounds-into-riffs got me quite excited. Unfortunately it became a bit predictable as track two started. Fuck, the drums on this sound like a drum machine *so* much, even though they're credited as being played by someone called Mischa. This is ok. *(JD)*
JOIN THE TEAM PLAYER, Altdettingerstrasse 6A, 81673 Muenchen, Germany.
www.jointheteamplayer.com

PANIC - Self Titled CDEP/ 9:35.
Jeez, are these guys fucking junkies or something? There's a picture of them on the cover and, man, they look like shit! In fact, the one with the big hooter looks so bad he almost looks BRITISH! Anyway, this non-smiling pissed offness obviously works in their favour because the music is a fantasically pissed off, fast, powerful, typically Bridge Nine all out hardcore attack. Cappo on crack I guess you could call it. Good stuff, but short. *(MD)*
BRIDGE NINE, PO Box 990052, Boston, MA 02199-0052, USA.

PERALTA - Self Titled CD/ 46:19.
From the eclectic Atarms Mechanics label (with bands diverse as SMALL BROWN BIKE, THOUGHTS OF IONESCO and BIDDY BIDDY BIDDY) comes a somewhat eclectic band in the form of PERALTA. This Chicago (Chicagese?) four-piece plays hardcore that's both melodic and chaotic as their music veers around like a drink-driver on a dark empty highway. Their sound takes on board undeniably demented and jagged hardcore and harnesses it with abrasive melodies until the end result is surprisingly palatable like bad whisky in good beer. It seems wrong, but what the hell, you like it anyway. A lot of PERALTA's sound actually harks back to some of the noisier SST bands when they were grooving in amongst the guitar noise. What's unfortunate for PERALTA is that this is reviewed in the same issue as THE LADDERBACK's new album, because it pales in comparison, but then, y'know, most stuff would and you can still put it on file that PERALTA are a very fine band. *(RR)*
ATARMS MECHANICS, PO Box 27, Marshall, MI 49068, USA.

PETER & THE TEST TUBE BABIES - "Mating Sounds of South American..." CD/ 74:57.
Definitely one of the best UK punk releases of the 1980's, this was the bands second album and it took the punk rock world by surprise. Highly melodic, superbly played and produced, with some fantastic lead guitar work that's backed up by a tight and highly competent band. Sure, the subject matter hadn't changed too much, but they really broke the boundaries of *"fun punk"* by backing up silly songs with well crafted, well thought-out music that still sounds good some 18 years later. There's the odd song that hasn't faired so well, the 80's Wham / Disco piss take on "Pissed Punks (go for it)" is appalling, but the album as a whole is great, a classic even. This re-issue comes with an amazing 10 bonus tracks including "Blown Out Again" (Re-hash mix), which has always remained a favourite song of mine. I know that by just seeing the bands name and the album title, many will dismiss this as rubbish, it's not, it's a great album that'll make you smile and rock yer socks off at the same time. I don't think the band ever reached these heights again… bunch of fucking drunks! *(DS)*
CAPTAIN Oil, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, HP10 8QA, UK.

PETER & THE TEST TUBE BABIES - "Loud Blaring Punk Rock" CD/ 39:22.
Basic, outrageous and retared lyrics, raw-yet-melodic punk rock… this is a re-issue of early TEST TUBES material… but then the liner notes say different! Peter tells us that they got a

stash of cash to put out a follow up to the excellent "Mating sounds..." LP (reviewed in this issue also), so slapped this set of songs together and presented it as a collection of old songs that were never meant to be released! The thing is, the first album "Pissed & Proud" is a classic, the next one was a huge jump musically and then this, well it's not very good to put it quite simply. If songs such as "Oral Annie", "Vicars wank too", "Beat up the mods", "Breast cancer" and "The Queen gives good blow-jobs" sound amusing to you then you may well find something of interest contained within. I think it's incredibly unfunny and the music is dull. At least with a name and a title like that, the chances of accidentally buying it are slim to zero. Not their finest hour, it has to be said. *(DS)*
CAPTAIN Oi!, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, HP10 8ZA, UK.

PG.99 / CITY OF CATEPILLAR - Split 7".
Ok I have to admit I`d bought and sold this prior to getting it for review so I knew what I was in for. COC are one of those dreary bloody "screamo" bands that just do my head in. look I know you`re all upset and what have you but please do not make music like you`re trying to mix RORSCHACH with the emotional torment of fucking Morrisey. It does not work 99 times out of 100. On the flip you have the much talked about PG. 99 who continually let me down. This effort is also in the "screamo" vein and therefore is a load of old gubbins. They do a FILTH cover and murder it. PG.99 seem to churn out records like there`s no tomorrow and granted some of them are pretty bloody good but lads it`s quality not quantity. I neither have the time, money or patience to seek them all out. Aparently deadly live however so I guess skip the £3 you`ll pay for this waste of plastic and go see them live in Sept. when they tour with the Devils. The one redeeming feature is the packaging which is pretty nice. *(FU)*
LEVEL PLANE, PO Box 280, New York, NY 10276, U$A.

PHANTOMSMASHER - Self Titled CD/ 42:46.
Haha, uh, help. ATOMSMASHER obviously tired of smashing them and instead turn to being a PHANTOMSMASHER but rest assured, no less intense are the sonics they bring with them. James Plotkin has done some fucked up stuff in his time, and surprisingly PHANTOMSMASHER is one of his more accessible records, aided in part by Dave Witte's insane drumming skills (when Plotkin isn't tweaking, triggering or sending his beats into hyper-space...) and probably not aided at all by DJ Speedranch's lunatic screams and nonsensical hollers. But for all this, in amongst the sheer deranged absurdity of it all, is melody. Well not exactly in amongst, but riding over the top, underneath, right down the fucking middle of it all. FANTOMAS, TOMAHAWK, MALDOROR and now PHANTOMSMASHER; all that brain-sick stretching of musical boundaries; save yourself now. *(RR)*
IPECAC.

PINBOL - Self Titled CD/ 40:01.
Not sure where to begin to describe this, the sleeve notes are in Spanish and the website is not found. The songs are also in Spanish, slightly funky and experimental with trumpets, saxophones and other instruments. Not terrible, but not as interesting as its lurid pink cover. *(HE)*
SIXWASNINE / www.sixwasninerecs.com

PITCH BLACK - Self Titled CD/ 33:05.
Thank god, a band with balls in my review pile. This is an easy one to tell you about, as it's total NERVE AGENTS meets AFI goth punk rockage and it works well. Hell, they even have a drawing of a pumpkin under the clear tray - how much more Davey Havoc can you get? Lyrics over pictures of graves? Atmospheric, almost "Omen" like chants in their quieter moments? It's all here kid, it's all here... like a bad nightmare that has a SON OF SAM, CRIMINALS and TSOL soundtrack, PITCH BLACK are here to fuck you up good and proper, Miichael Myers style. Good stuff indeed. *(MD)*
REVELATION.

PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS - "Fucking Fight" 7".
More powerful stuff here from Denver, Colorado's PLANES... The two tracks, 'Fuckign Fight' and 'The Part You Left Out' show how their knack for delivering urgent, intense and powerful hardcore is coming from a well that is yet to be dried out. Released on Santa Barbara's Dim Mak this seven is packaged in a nice thick cover with some nice inlay prints. Nice. *(JD)*
DIM MAK, PO Box 14041, Santa Barbara, CA 93107, USA.

POINTING FINGER / IN PIECES - "The Distance Between..." CD/ 35:26.
We must be on youth-crew revival #8 by now, but hey, who's counting? Two new, young Euro-Edge bands on offer here, doing that YOUTH OF TODAY style. POINTING THE FINGER are particularly Cappo-esque in the vocal department, and really are holding down the whole thing very stylishly indeed, with pick-slides, beefy crew vocals and breakdowns galore. IN PIECES are a bit moodier and moshier, somewhere between RIGHT BRIGADE and FLOORPUNCH. They hold their chords longer, make their pick-slides last longer, and generally have a more hard hitting delivery. But this is at the expense of energy and precision in delivery and while their tracks are good, they don't quite come off as solid and complete as the POINTING THE FINGER tracks. But this is still an awesome CD. *(SM)*
STILL BELIEVE, c/o Birte Huls, Julius-Leber-Strasse 6, 59192, Germany.

PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES - Self Titled CD/ 12:12.
There's a lot of buzz concerning this band, I'd not heard them before and the name, to me, just conjures up images of some awful USA wannabe Swedish garage punk. Then I noticed they had a record out on Lookout! and was immediately confused (it's not difficult) to the point of interest. The first thing that hits you about this 4 track EP is the impressive and impassioned female vocals, bringing to mind the late Mia Zapata (The GITS) and the range of the bands musical assault. One moment, melodic and soaring, the next, screamy and in yer face. There's ingenious interplay between the instruments and it appears as if a lot of pre-thought has gone into the song compositions, to maximise effect. It should be a mish-mash of styles and genres that falls flat on every level, but they pull it off and despite being able to spot traits of other bands on every song, these folks take it all onto the next level and go beyond being just emulators. I think they could be quite explosive in the live arena. *(DS)*
COALITION, Newtonstraat 212, 2562 KW, Den Haag, The Netherlands.

PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES - "Is it Broken Doctor?" CD/ 27:38.
Containing members of the much missed and prematurely departed MURDER CITY DEVILS, PGMG are a welcome return to the fore of innovative punk rock. The sound here is sometimes difficult to describe; imagine the intelligent, soulful and tricky guitar lines that AT THE DRIVE-IN would deliver complemented with the refreshing sound of Andrea Zollo's vocals. The play off of female/male vocals is also great with one continuously energetic back-beat keeping the whole show going 'til the end. Punk, emo, hardcore? I think these guys n' gals transcend such limitations, especially with their inclusion of the occasional and well placed lick of synthesiser/drum machine. This is one sassy record. *(JD)*
LOOKOUT, 3264 Adeline Street, Berkely, CA 94703, USA.
www.lookoutrecords.com

PREVENT FALLS - "A Newer More Shattered You" CD/ 39:13.
PREVENT FALLS encourage a beautiful return to QUICKSAND type form with chugga chugga guitar, discordant sounds, metal riffs, meaningful post-hardcore vocals and faster moments of the emotional hardcore type. This stands out by being different rather than exceptional but throw in more bands like THURSDAY, EX NUMBER FIVE, and THE COPPERPOT JOURNALS and we'll have a modern retro revival. Bring it on! *(HE)*
EQUAL VISION, PO Box 14, Hudson, NY 12534, USA.

PROTEX BLUE - "Muckrackin'" CD/ 25:43.
Some good ska-tinged punk rock action here from this French band who kick out a cool sound of their very own that could only possibly be described as akin to RANDY going deep-sea diving with PINHEAD GUNPOWDER and taking underwater photographs of THE (I)NC and rare species of CITIZEN FISH on a sunny day in July. Not only do these guys rock, but they understand the unwritten rule that all good ska sounds slightly evil. This is shown best with the creepy yet catchy track "Upset Me". Only problem is, it ends too soon with only eight tracks, you are left waiting with baited breath for a longer release in the future. *(DM)*
SMALL BUDGET, BP No 7, 78110, Le Vesinet, France.

PUT - "Surgical" CD/ 69:03.
This is really good techno, noise, rock. I think fans of GODFLESH and ATARI TEENAGE RIOT may find a few good things in this puppy's belly. What we have here is a sound that mixes all sorts of fucked up samples, pulsating soundscapes and the occasional dash of jagged guitar. Vocally this guy reminds me of the throaty moan that FUDGE TUNNEL'S Alex Newport would have coughed up a few years ago. In fact his voice gives a very European feel to it. There's certainly no wannabe yank mc-ing going on here. Harsh and good. *(JD)*
POGO, 11 Rue De La Sourderie, 78 180 Montigney Le Bretonneux, France.

RANDY - "You Can't Keep A Good Band Down" CD/ 40:08.
I had this album on vinyl a while back from Rugger Bugger but haven't been able to hear it since my deck broke, and then when I finally got a new record player I discovered to my horror that the vinyl was now scratched! Luckily it seems to have been re-released on CD here by Burning Heart along with two extra bonus tracks and so I finally can once again listen to this awesome album! Trashy, harmony-riddled, political pop-punk here from Sweden that simultaneously makes you want to dance while fighting the system. "Little Toulouse" and "Working Class Radio" are my favourite songs on the CD but all of them kick the proverbial ass. A definite must if you want your music intelligent and rocking! *(DM)*
BURNING HEART, Box 441, 701 48 Örebro, Sweden.

REACHING FORWARD - "Burning Their Lies" CD/ 19:25.
Originally released on Holland's crucial label Reflections, sees this Dutch powerhouse licensed to the awesome Bridge Nine (anyone see their interview in MRR recently?) Been following these guys from day one, their stuff on Commitment, their LP and splits. REACHING FORWARD are awesome youth crew styled hardcore, bursting with energy, catchy and done in the best possible taste. Excellent quality, ace songs and chunky bass lines to die for. Backed up with well written lyrics and a nice layout make it a winner. *(MH)*
BRIDGE NINE, PO Box 990052, Boston, MA 02199-0052, USA.

REAGAN SS / JOHN BROWNS ARMY - Split 7".
Wowee! REAGAN SS are mad, fast, old school, fast, fast, fast punk rock! Their address is the Engine fanzine address, so I think punk legend Matt Average is the singer, bonus! Lyrics are generally about the mundane like working 40 hours a week, etc - the stuff all good punk songs are made of! And there's also a homage to keeping it short, fast and loud called 'Make it Fast'! Punk like you probably can't even remember... on the flip we got JOHN BROWNS ARMY from New York who are as fast but more gutteral with a darker side to them overall. On the whole, both bands kill and live would make a crazy billing together. Cripes! *(MD)*
COALITION, Newtonstraat 212, 2562 KW Den Haag, The Netherlands.

RED ANIMAL WAR / SLOWRIDE - Split CD/ 23:55.
I saw RED ANIMAL WAR fairly recently and wasn't that impressed, so it comes as a pleasant surprise to find their material on this split much more enjoyable. A lot more indie and lot less hardcore than their live show, their 3 songs are quite experimental. There are hints of SHELLAC and BRAID, and they use a lot of different textures to good effect to make up their overall sound. SLOWRIDE are new to me and I like them, in fact I fully intend to pick up their album very soon. They have that "Dear you" era JAWBREAKER sound going down and they do it well, with lyrics like "*My job is one smoke and three JAWBREAKER songs away*" you know where they're coming from. The bands complement each other, and along with some awesome artwork featuring photographs from the JFK assassination, this is well worth buying. SLOWRIDE could be my new favourite band and if you're missing JAWBREAKER too, then you may feel the same way. *(DS)*
DEEP ELM, PO Box 36939, Charlotte, NC 28236, USA.

RED MARTIAN - "Automaton" CDEP/ 18:58.
This sounds like some obscure early 80's LA punk band with a minimalist production and a new wave, mid-paced style. It's quirky, the lyrics are interesting but I still have yet to fathom out a reason for its existence. I guess it's a local (Seattle) thing, and that's all it will be based on this. They got a lot of work to do before they hit the heights of decidedly average. *(DS)*
band@thevisitors.com

RED MARTIAN - "Deny Authority" CD/ 38:06.
So there's having influences and there's ripping off bands to such an extent that it does nothing but show that your band has zero fucking ideas. I mean, this sounds like 7 SECONDS.

No, see it sounds EXACTLY like 7 SECONDS. I don't get it - why bother? I mean, it's okay and all, and the sentiments are cool (denying of authority, etc) but not only does RED MARTIAN sound stupidly like 7 SECONDS, they then go and make total fools of themselves by including a 7 SECONDS COVER!!! Remember the episode of Alan Patridge where he had a stalker fan, and went to his house and there was a shine to him with a lifesize cardboard cut out sat in the corner? Well I can guarantee you at Stephen Jones' house (singer for RED MARTIAN) there's a scary fuckin' attic room dedicated to Kevin Seconds. That shit scares me for sure! But yeah, just pick up "The Crew", it's better. *(MD)*
NOT CLEAR WHAT LABEL.

REDLINE / BORN FROM PAIN - "Swift, Silent, Deadly" CD/ 26:32.
REDLINE are what happens when you mix equal parts HOODS, MORBID ANGEL and HATEBREED. A drum-heavy blend of chugging, weighty 'tough guy' hardcore, held together by evil vocals, thick old-school mid-sections and palm-muting that would put TERRORZONE to shame. It's like hearing 25 TA LIFE'S 'Keepin' It Real' CD for the first time all over again! I mean come, on, you can't fuck with lyrics like "I am your God when you step into my life. I run this shit". I won't say too much about BORN FROM PAIN here, as they get a full review elsewhere, but I'll just point out that they've laid down 2 new tracks for this split and rerecorded one of the album ones, both of which sound much darker and more metallic than earlier outings. As always, the buzzword is HATEBREED, but I'm afraid REDLINE just about win this wrestling match! *(SM)*
GANGSTYLE, Ecrevissestraat 41, 6125, AW, Obbicht, The Netherlands.

RELATIVES, THE - "Everybody's Cynical" CDS/ 10:16.
A prime example of a band, or their management - in this case John Hall of Spank Management, (who is backed up by Joe Shooman - Spank Press. If it's TV / Radio you need, then Spank Promotions are primed to deal with it - I bet their phone doesn't stop ringing) sending in a 'product' to FRACTURE, with obviously minimal knowledge of the real drive behind the folk who make this zine grind, and the vague notion that someone (anyone!) here would actually be suckered by this crap. The music is just boring dressed-up alt.ROCK bullshit, that so wants to make the pages of glossy High Street mags, with adverts for their "latest" release, that read something like "tense, emotional cascading eruptions of Nu-alt. ROCK. emo, blah, blah, blah (FRACTURE)"... but hey, welcome to the real world. You Suck. Go take a hike. And take all your "endorsed" equipment with you. *(PC)*
SPANK.

REMOTES - "Bitch, Bitch, Bitch" CD-R/ 17:11.
This is on Mutant Pop's cool short-run CD-R label. Unlike some folk in the punk scene who for no good reason have shunned the advent of CD-Rs, Mutant Pop have instead embraced it and started a small mailorder only label that specializes in CD-R releases which I think is an awesome idea... it's like a twenty-first century tape label... anyway, REMOTES, whilst they are never going to win any prizes for originality, they will win a lot of prizes for playing straight up kick-ass RAMONES-style punk rock that totally rocks like a motherfucker! The best part is that, just like the RAMONES they all have the same surname (Remote) and song credits either go to one Remote, two Remotes or three Remotes which I found funny because it was totally meaningless. This also has a video on it if you have a computer and is just a totally pop-punk pleasure package. *(DM)*
MUTANT POP, 5010 NW Shasta, Corvallis, OR 97330, USA.

RENO DIVORCE - "Naysayers and Yesmen" CD/ 30:40.
If you're getting pissed off waiting so long for a new SOCIAL DISTORTION album that feels like it's never gonna appear, then maybe you need to pick this up. It's SOCIAL DISTORTION down to a tee. The difference between RENO DIVORCE sounding like SD and RED MARTIAN sounding like 7 SECONDS though is that RENO do it really well. They have some great songs and the good production really makes them shine through. I guess the only problem is that Mike Ness fans are gonna find this almost offensive, because the vocalist sounds a lot like him and, on top of the music you could definitely do a double take while this is playing! Someone said recently that this was on par with SD's "White Light..." album but I have to disagree with that really because that's like, a fucking masterpiece man! Still, this is most definitely good punk rock that any SOCIAL D fan should definitely think about picking up. I do, however, think they should have dropped the poor 'Girls I Could Have Fucked' song though, as it's got the lamest lyrics and is not the best track on here at all. *(MD)*
BOSS TUNEAGE, PO Box 74, Sandy, SG19 2WB, UK.

REPRISAL - "Mail Order Knife Set" CD/ 45:30.
I actually quite like this in a funny kind of way. This tough guy stuff from Italy is really well played and well fucking heavy. I reckon they caught me in a good mood or something. We've got some MADBALL-eque beatdowns on track one and some (poor) SLAYER style riffs on track two. Just check out these fucking lyrics though man, *"You say you wanna cap my ass, So watcha gonna do when we come for you? You wanna fuck with us? Man I wouldn't do it!"* Well, I'd tell you what I'd do; providing I met you at a gig I'd have your fruit juice rider spiked with NATO designed LSD which is so strong that you'd come up about 2 songs into your set and start thinking that you were performing in front of room full of flesh-eating undead. You'd then start shitting yourself so much that you'd get you fingers caught in your strings, and your drummer's double bass thudding would provoke one of the biggest bowel movements in history. Your brains would be absolutely fucked. Fucked for life. Track four has got quite a good singey bit though, eh? *(JD)*
GOOD LIFE, PO Box 114, Kortrijk 8500, Belgium.
www.goodliferecordings.com

RETISONIC - "Lean Beat" CD/ 21:54.
If Jason Farrell was wanting to get away from his BLUETIP connections then the design of this CD gives the game away immediately because it looks (as all BLUETIP sleeves) fucking ace. Cutaway sections galore and clever folds make it another Farrell masterpiece of jewel case innovation. For that matter, the music gives the game away anyway - because this is virtually a direct continuation of BLUETIP with his same trademarked angular riffs and skewed melodies. There always seemed to be a problem with shifting line-ups in BLUETIP so he's tackled that here by covering vocals, guitars and bass himself and leaving the drum duties up to former GARDEN VARIETY beater Joe Gorelick. And although this really is a new chapter of BLUETIP, it also has a fresher sound than anything they've done before - maybe as a result of having greater control over the sound this time. A track like "Filthy Way to Lose Yourself" is cleaner than anything I've heard from BLUETIP, with a hint of a new wave feel to the edgy pop hooks in amongst the familiar DC hardcore. And it works well, providing the spark that BLUETIP were beginning to sound they needed before their demise. So no punches pulled - RETISONIC are BLUETIP, but customised, revitalised and still highly capable. *(RR)*
MODERN CITY, BP 6035, 69411 Lyon Cedex 06, France.

RIGHT DIRECTION - "Beyond The Beyonds" CD/ 42:23.
This lot have been slugging it out for a good few years now and I've never really been that keen on them, but they've never pussy-footed around when it comes to making a point or speaking out and for that I respect 'em. This time round, the venom of Dave Reumers' lyrics is aimed at 'new school' hardcore bands, idiots who buzz around bands long after the gig has ended and can't take a hint, and bands who jump ship when the going gets tough. There is also a song made up from joke lyrics written late one night on the WARZONE / BACKFIRE tour a few years back and is lyrically a collaboration between the now deceased Richie BACKFIRE and Raybeez from WARZONE as well as other members of the collective bands. Musically this CD draws from Oi influences, a touch of SLAPSHOT and a thick dose of NY styled old school, but with that distinct European edge. *(SM)*
GANGSTYLE, Ecrevissestraat 41, 6125, AW, Obbicht, The Netherlands.

RIISTETYT - "Tervutuloa" 7".
I already have this 7", so I know how good it is. I have played to death and whole heartily recommend it everyone and sundry, because it's really good. One of the classic Finnish bands returns in full form with these songs, which was originally released by Fight in Finland and now Havoc have re-released it with an extra song. Fast brutal hardcore, full of punches and ready to knock you on the head. This copy is on blue vinyl. *(MH)*
HAVOC, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408, USA.

RITCHIE WHITES, THE - "Snitches Get Stitches" CD/ 23:41.
Pretty average rock and roll street-punk that fails to light any fires underneath my ass, that's for sure. I can see what they're aiming for, but they don't hit any of the peaks needed to make this shit rock out. It almost feels as if it's all gonna collapse at times, everything's a little weak, the guitar is too low in the mix, the vocals aren't powerful enough and the pace is a tad too slow. This isn't very exciting, yet with a little work on the sound and execution you could imagine them to be a decent band. Maybe they were unlucky in the studio or something. Probably the least favourite record that I've heard from the TKO camp... shame. *(DS)*
TKO, 3126 W. Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA, 23221, USA.

ROCKET/CORE - 7".
I was slightly confused, but am now sticking to the theory that this is a band called ROCKET/CORE, not a split single by ROCKET and CORE, with both bands sharing the same singer. There ain't much info y'see, and my Japanese is non-existent. Okay, 2 tracks, I take a shot on the ROCKET side to start with... and "I Like it!" is a wild 'n totally heavy Punk crusher with tough Rocking overtones, super-blasting filthy guitar crank, all over the place, and a grit-spewing vocalist, who rips his throat to shreds, for our benefit. Fantastic. The flipside is less frantic, but equally heavy-ass and over-the-top - with ripped throat dude Ryo turning it on Vim Fuego style. Crazzeee!!!! Hectic shit, and I've already told ya that. *(PC)*
H:G FACT.

ROCKING HORSE WINNER, THE - "Horizon" CD/ 36:23.
Jolie, the honey vocalled singer for the ROCKING HORSE WINNER, has sung backups on two DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL albums, so her punk creds out of the way, this uplifting CD showcases her talents in the indie pop arena. The music is led resolutely by Jolie's alluring vocals, but the powerful indie pop guitars drive as hard as they can anyway. I found the tracks on here really enjoyable but incredibly hard to pin point. Jolie's voice is great but the songs are no better than other indie girl bands like JALE and THE JULIANA THEORY. Will wait for more evidence before delivering a verdict. *(HE)*
EQUAL VISION.

ROSWELL - "The Nothing" CD/ 33:56.
Imagine HARVEST lost the slow, palm muted middle sections, and offered a less forgiving onslaught of churning powerchords ala STALINGRAD. That seems to be the sound ROSWELL have. There are lots of bleak descending minor chords, gravely vocals, hectic drumming, and good contrasts between the tempos of 'fast + rocky' and depressingly slow and desperate. This CD comes in the nicest digipack I've ever seen, and the whole thing has a feeling of minimalism and barrenness, right down to its title, which is the second 'Never Ending Story' reference I've noticed within hardcore recently (the other being Victory band ATREYU). There are some well placed female vocals and guitar hooks that, if the vocals weren't so raw, would bring it in line, momentarily, with the likes of BOYSETSFIRE. *(SM)*
BRIDGE, Box 1903, 58118 Linkoping, Sweden.

SCALLY - "Que Fue De Los Dos" 7"
Took a bit of work to find out that although SCALLY sing in Spanish, they are in fact from Switzerland. I don't know why it's like this, it just is. Okay, musically this is the sort of shit that your typical British scally (for non-British readers see also: charver, pikey, scutter and Dan Heap) would hate as this is seven tracks of fast and abrasive punk rock with bags of raw aggression. There's five studio recorded songs, all of which blaze along with three-chord powerhouse guitars and yelled vocals. It's the two extra live tracks that sound the best to me though, especially "Noche Triste" that brings to mind MANIFESTO JUKEBOX with it's rough-hewn melodies. This also comes in a decent sleeve with a fold-out poster / lyrics sheet so good call all round really. *(RR)*
Oliver Garcia, Dorfplatz 1, CH8750 Riedern, Switzerland / scally@gmx.de

SCARROTS - "Peace of Sunshine" CD/ 35:00.
Some pretty slick pop punk here from Belgium. This stuff has got a really nice production and their songs are great for this kind of stuff. They even have some synthesiser on the go here. A nice bit of wah pedal here too. I guess they have a definate quirky edge to them that makes them stand out over some other pop punk bands. Maybe they just love WEEZER though. Their American accents gets a bit annoying too. I'm not entirely sure if I like it. *(JD)*
GOOD LIFE, PO Box 114, Kortrijk 8500, Belgium.

SEGUE - Self Titled 10".
Five tracks of screamed and scathing hardcore from these ex-SERVITUDE people from Minneapolis (so Felix Havoc has probably mentioned them somewhere at some point). This was actually recorded back in 1998 but was limited to 50 CDR copies so it's great that this Polish label has chosen to re-release it on the finest vinyl format available and with nice card-packaging to boot, because this really is worthy of more exposure. The dual vocals (possibly even triple) shred the vocal chords as they strive to take prominence over chainsaw guitars and snare-heavy drums. Apparently this is crust but how would I know when the music is simply raging hardcore with electronic MAN IS THE BASTARD segues (sorry...) and there's no photos of said crusties. Whatever, it's good. *(RR)*
TRUJACA FALA, PO Box 13, 81 806 Sopot 6, Poland / fala@bg.univ.gda.pl

SELKKAUS - "Luokkataistelu - Teoria & Kaytanto" LP.
Political punk from Finland, with fucking ace lyrics. The music is anarcho punk, but with a modern twist. It alternates between fast and slow breakdowns, with the odd spoken word and sample. Great cover and artwork from old age anarchist books. Cool record for sure. *(MH)*
KAMASET LEVYT, Mechelininkatue 24 B 30, 00100 Helsinki, Finland.

SEPTIC TUMOR - Self Titled 7".
10 songs, that are fast, furious and in your face hardcore punk. Spazzcore, with touches of DROPDEAD, BROTHER INFERIOR, a little crust, and a dose of raging punk rock japcore style. Songs about animal rights, GET A LIFE - DON'T TAKE A LIFE, society and other things. Was very pleasantly surprised by this and was all the better for it. A pretty wicked 7", DIY to the bone, so make sure you hunt it down as I don't think you'll be let down by it. *(MH)*
CHODE BRAND MUSIC, 1138 N. Edgefield, Dallas, TX 75208, USA.

SEPTIC TUMOR / AKKOLYTE - Split 7".
SEPTIC TUMOR on this record are sounding like a rawer and more tinnier version of SEPTIC DEATH, the virus must be spreading. But it's all good and the continue from their other 7", along with the good lyrics. AKKOLYTE are only two guys, who are more grind than their label mates. Cool and it's on yellow vinyl. *(MH)*
CHODE BRAND MUSIC, 1138 N. Edgefield, Dallas, TX 75208, USA.

SHANDON - "Not So Happy To Be Sad..." CD/ 34:08.
Now this is what I like to see! A ska-punk band with balls! These guys play catchy hardcore-ska-punk'n'roll that blisters and burns out of the speakers like some kind of horn and harmony-laced whirling dervish. Now, that's just review hyperbole and I don't really know what a whirling dervish would sound like but if it's anything like SHANDON then it's kind of like ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT appearing on a talk-show presented by NOFX talking about how LESS THAN JAKE cheated on them with BAD RELIGION behind their back! In other words, these guys melt all pretenders in the blaze of their ska punk glory! *(DM)*
FUNTIME, Johan Quinten, Vlasselaar 13, 3221, Nieuwrode (Holsbeek), Belgium

SHE'S LOST CONTROL - Self Titled 7".
A new Norwegian band on CRASH's Sound Fiction label and actually ploughing the same furrow as CRASH with some neat and fresh indie-rock. "Sumatran Coffee" is an energy-filled blast of washy guitars, vocals with a hint of megaphone distortion, driving 4-4 drums and a clever GODSPEED styled interlude. When it's powering along it reminds me of a few of the BCore bands for some reason - maybe a cross between AINA and THE UNFINISHED SYMPATHY. The clean but frantically strummed guitars even give it a little SONIC YOUTH feel, aided by the general 'on-the-edge' nature of it all. You can still rock out to it no problem though. Flipside track "Traffic" is way smoother though, a sassy tune of hammond warmth shuffling around with simple drum patterns and soft vocals. Imagine KARATE with the jazz chords played out through silky keyboards. Be interesting to see what direction SHE'S LOST CONTROL pan out into it, either one would be more than good. *(RR)*
SOUND FICTION, PO Box 386, 5805 Bergen, Norway.

SHOTWELL / ZERO FAST - Split 7".
Now why don't more punk bands remember how to handle punk rock like SHOTWELL? I'm talking about playing music that's snotty and up-front, fast-paced and powerful. The sort of music that actually makes it sound like their actions do speak louder than their words. And with their excellent political lyrics it's great to see SHOTWELL back them up by being heavily involved in so many San Francisco grassroots activities and street shows. They've recently played street shows at the WTO as well as SF marches, and more often than not been shut down by The Man. Punk rock isn't about professing your love for Guinness, signing to Epitaph, overpolishing your production and playing the Warped Tour. It's about playing music that moves you, delivering a message and acting on it - aka SHOTWELL. And ZERO FAST continue the fine tradition with a couple of blasts of punk rock that's like a cross between FOUR LETTER WORD and HOT WATER MUSIC - so that'll be STRAWMAN then. The vocals are gravelled and spat with anger, as the music powers along fuelled by chugging guitars and solid rhythms. Two bands from two Bay Cities - San Francisco and Yokohama - both delivering the punk with power and sincerity. *(RR)*
SNUFFY SMILE, 4-1-16-201 Daita, Setagaya-Ku, Tokyo 155-0033, Japan.

SHORT ROUND - "Language" CD/ 27:39.
Jason from THE CHINKEES here in a band that are a million miles away from the smooth ska those guys play! Instead SHORT ROUND are a power-pop emo band with some nice vocal hooks, harmonies and chugging guitars. Not the most original band of this kind that I have ever heard, but not bad either... just kind of above average stuff that, now I have, I will listen to a lot, but I just don't know if I would have have bought it. *(DM)*
ASIAN MAN.

SHUTDOWN - "1990 - 1995" CD/ 70:40.
For those who don't know the SHUTDOWN story, let me put it in a nutshell for you. They were one of the best UK bands to emerge in the 90s, articulate, powerful, melodic and explosive in the live arena. They were heads and shoulders above most, if not all, the UK bands on the punk rock circuit at the time. They were up there with such luminary bands such as FARSIDE, LIFETIME and TEXAS IS THE REASON. They should have been the most applauded UK band of their era, the trouble was, they were ahead of their time. The UK audiences, as a whole, were not ready for what we now know as *"emo"* music. Yep, it may be the greatest sound of the cities now, but back in '96 / '97 hecklers shouted out *"emo"* as an insult! My, my, how the times they a-change huh? Before they called it a day, SHUTDOWN released two CDs on Golf Records, the first was a delayed release and by the time it appeared the band had certainly moved on some degree. Their second album "Icarus" was, and still is a crowning achievement, a faultless release from a band at their peak. When they decided to hang up their boots it was a sad, sad for true music fans in this country. If you weren't around in punk rock / hardcore circles in the mid 90's, well now's your chance to catch up on some class sounds courtesy of Boss Tuneage. What this CD offers up is the bands 12", the singles and various tracks they recorded, maybe everything excluding the 2 albums. I hadn't heard the early tracks for many moons and it was obvious from the start, they had a knack of writing original sounding material, sometimes mid-paced and sometimes faster, but never losing track of the good tune factor. Very clean sounding, lots of tempo changes and a wealth of ideas to keep the listener tuned in. They just kept getting better, that is even more so evident on this CD with the songs in chronological order, the growth in musicianship, songwriting and execution is more than impressive. For me, personally, the band really found their feet in 1992 with songs like "Monday Mornings", which still sounds fresh and relevant today, in fact the version on here is better than the one that appeared on their debut album. There are 23 songs on this disc, including their BLONDIE and BEAT covers and the crowd favourite "The No.1 Seed". With a radio interview tacked on the end, this will show you everything you needed to know about one of best bands to have emerged from this underground scene. Pure class and top drawer tuneage, you HAVE to acquire this, it's mandatory for all those blessed with good taste and an appreciation of quality. Proof positive than the UK can produce bands as good as and even better than the Americans can. *(DS)*
BOSS TUNEAGE, PO Box 74, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2WB, UK.

SICK OF IT ALL - "Live In A Dive" CD/ 46:24.
It was packed on the Tube this morning, rush hour and all that. But with this on my CD Walkman, I really wanted to get a cirlclepit going. It's nice to hear a balanced sprinkling of gems from the SOIA roster performed live like this. I loved their 'Live In A World Full Of Hate' album, (which I estimate to be approaching its 9th birthday by now) and this one is even tighter, more energetic and with plenty of onstage banter and humor. My favourite moment is where the band lay down the gauntlet for people to come sing one of their oldest songs, hoping they'll fuck it up. They give the mic to some dude to sing 'Rat Pack' from 'Blood, Sweat And No Tears', and the dude takes absolute OWNAGE of the song, doesn't miss a word, and totally delivers it in style, much to the bemusement of the band who had all these jokes prepared should he fuck it up! I sorta lost touch with this bands material after the "Scratch The Surface" CD, but I still have the utmost respect for their longevity and integrity over all these years, and this is one great CD as stuff off the newest album sits right next to tracks from the very first EP with total consistency. I'm not sure what's up with the CD-ROM footage this CD is supposed to contain, it doesn't run on my 1 week old top-of-the-range Hewlett Packard thing, but that may just be a glitch on the 'promo' copy I received. *(SM)*
FAT WRECK CHORDS.

SINNERS AND SAINTS - "The Sky is Falling" CD.
C'mon, this is a joke right? It has to be! SAINTS AND SINNERS is ex-members of BLOOD FOR BLOOD, THE DUCKY BOYS, TEN YARD FIGHT and IN MY EYES playing a sort of CHEAP TRICK pub rock with Bruce Springsteen's blue-collar tendencies. Lyrically, the singer keeps talking to his "honey" and delivering some fucking priceless lyrics that are well worth sharing: *"You want to dance with the devil? You want to see what he sees? The devil won't have you so starry eyed when he knocks you to your knees"*. Fantastic! Or how about *"And if I could I'd marry this bottle in my hand, spend the rest of my days screwin' round in my rock and roll band..."*. Like I said, priceless. I mean, sheesh, on their video they even have a hilarious backdrop of a winged-skull with a halo over it's head (geddit?) and they have this other logo would make an awesome kitschy tattoo - a coffin with devil horns on it (the sinner, see?) and another with a halo above it (yep, the saint!)... "The Sky is Falling" is so bad it's actually good, just like a cross between CHEAP TRICK and Bruce Springsteen should be. That word again: priceless. *(RR)*
BRIDGE NINE, PO Box 90052, Boston, MA 02199-0052, USA.

SIX REASONS TO KILL / ABSIDIA - "Morphology Of Fear" LP.
Firstly and foremost for me the artwork on this is incredible. Human sculptures all deranged and as if decaying. You even get a big colour booklet the same size as the LP with more stuff, very eye catching. It's very much in the same vein as that incredible artist Mid. Anyway, the bands don't actually live up to the artwork I'm afraid. SIX REASONS TO KILL, the best of both bands, play straight up industrial style metal. Fast and slow bits, mainly the latter. The lyrics of both bands aren't too happy. ABSIDIA, after the long intro I was hoping to get blown away, but it's pretty basic crust metal with grunty vocals. Oh well. *(MH)*
PER KORO, PO Box 102514, 28025 Bremen, Germany.

SKY PROMISES RAIN - Self Titled CD/ 22:19.
At last, an emotional and melodic rock band that I don't have to compare to SAMIAM or the GET UP KIDS. About time. Nope, SKY PROMISES RAIN are playing their rock with a more indirect approach that encompasses more contrasts than most other bands. Although, this is still undeniably in that whole melodic rock genre, SPR play their music with more of DC edge to it, that brings to mind a little GRAY MATTER or even a hint of FUGAZI mixed in with the hardcore of AVAIL. While they can still take it down to a clean melody, they can also deliver the hardcore punch when needed that gives it a real energy. The electronic remix of one of their songs was a bit unnecessary but it wasn't half as criminal as it could have been so we'll let it go. Hardly essential, but a very decent disc nonetheless. *(RR)*
MILLIPEDE, Kohlfurterstrasse 2, 90473, Nurnberg, Germany.

SMALLTOWN - "Fall Into Line" 7".
Pretty standard rockin' street punk, with a little '78 / '79 punk sound that adds some melody. This could easily fit in on the TKO roster without the blink of an eye. At times they sound like The BELTONES, especially on the song *"Tomorrow"* which rips off Ralph McTell's "Streets of London" quite nicely. Enjoyable enough music that sounds better with each beer you drink. The sad thing is that you know damn well, if I ever get a new band together, it's gonna sound like this! You can take the Boy outta the Oi! but you can't take the... yeah you know! This is good stuff and for 4 songs, it sure seems to last a fair while. *(DS)*
BRIDGE, Box 1903, 58118 Linkoping, Sweden.

SNAFU / SINCE THE DAY - "Things You Barely Know" CD/ 32:15.
SNAFU sound like BLOODLET if you played their 33rpm vinyl at 45rpm. The vocals sound slightly cracklier, and the song structures aren't as off-kilter, but the similarities are more than just fleeting. SNAFU add some almost melodic singing and the occasional grind passage pounces to the formula, but these tracks really are one big old shrine to BLOODLET. I also chuckled that the end of their thanks list says 'and you, brah'. Heh. SINCE THE DAY are a chaotic combination of ONEFINEDAY, GUILT, and due to the size of this singers lungs, THE JUDAS FACTOR. There's a disorientating display of frenzied, spiraling guitars, excessive feedback and enormous riffs, throwing a glimpse at IRON MONKEY. In all, 2 very different bands complement each other perfectly and both come off sounding intense as hell. *(SM)*
BASTARDIZED, PO Box 200521, 56005 Koblenz, Germany.

SOLEA - Self Titled CD/ 18:03.
Another band that certain elements of the punk scene will have been waiting for with excitable little breaths since SOLEA comprises Sergie and Johnny (of SAMIAM) and Garrett (ex TEXAS IS THE REASON and NEW RISING SONS) along with another bloke who, alas, is probably destined to always be known as "another bloke" under the circumstances. Regardless, Sergie and Garrett are the primary songwriters and it shows as this disc shines with their trademarks. Just five tracks, and each of them displaying a slightly different facet of the pair's musical influences. The first three tracks are 'Sergie songs', and they rock with acres of pop appeal. There's a bunch of SAMIAM vibes to them especially in "Clouds in My Way", but as soon as Garrett's vocals kick in the whole dynamic of the song changes since Garrett's tones possess more fragility than Jason Beebout's rockier voice. The last two songs are 'Garrett songs' and bring in another side to SOLEA - heavy-hearted and slightly regretful rock, minor chords and sentimental vocals. They bear a lot more in common with NEW RISING SONS than TEXAS, but the fact of the matter is that the guy is an amazing songwriter, no matter what sound the songs are filtered through. And on here the soul-laid-bare acoustic "Shotgun Wounds" is worth the admission price alone. If you were expectant, SOLEA are delivering, with style. *(RR)*
DEFIANCE, Ritterstrasse 52, 50668 Koln, Germany.

SOVIETTES, THE - "T.C.C.P." 7".
Listen up Comrades, cuz THE SOVIETTES, from Minneapolis, are pretty damn enjoyable. Three gals (guitar/guitar/bass) who all share vocal duties (by the sounds of it), plus one guy drumming. Four bullish tracks, laced with buzzing and melodic momentum that do hold similarities at times with THE LUNACHICKS. The lyrics are a collection of personal experiences involving loose tongue friends, fighting the status quo (Rick Parfitt watch out!), religious propaganda, and a spat they had with a concert promoter (I think). Neat cover art too, makes for an all round decent single. *(PC)*
POP RIOT, PO Box 14985, Minneapolis, MN 55414, USA.

SPACE OF WAIST - "Too Afraid To Walk Away" CD/ 34:48.
So intrigued was I by this CD that I went and took a peak at this bands website, and I just read that the singer is currently undergoing chemotherapy. If you are reading this review Thom, you sound like a strong and focussed person if this CD is anything to go by, so my thoughts are with you and I hope you can shake your illness off completely and carry on creating and playing gigs and doing what you obviously love if the passion and drive of these vocals are anything to go by. That said, this isn't the typical style of music you'd expect to read about in Fracture. It is a lot more relaxed, mellow, but at the same time occasionally tortured and twisted ala A PERFECT CIRCLE, while other parts hint at SMASHING PUMPKINS in places. Everything is well played and very well recorded, and finished off nicely with a slick layout and a funky little keyboard ditty at the end. *(SM)*
VICTIM VILLAIN / www.spaceofwaist.co.uk

SPAZBOY / NOTHING COOL - Split 7".
I think this got held up in the mail for about 7 years or something, it certainly has an old school feel to it on every level, from the artwork (complete with *Cometbus* style handwriting) to the music on offer. Scratchy and raw, yet melodic punk rock in the vein of several of the early Lookout! bands and also bringing to mind early DILLINGER FOUR and bands of a similar ilk. NOTHING COOL recorded their tracks in 1995 and I'm sure I've heard this band before... anyways, it's not mind-blowing stuff here by any means, it's solid punk rock and enjoyable enough. A little more info on why this was released would have been cool, are the bands still going? What ties them together on this split? Why is it on a French label? *(DS)*
SMALL BUDGET, BP No. 07, 78110 Le Vesinet, Cedex, France.

SPIT - S/T 7".
Solid punk rock from France with a great energetic early 90s Dischord feel - I'm thinking MARGINAL MAN, GOVERNMENT ISSUE et al but with a more direct AVAIL styled approach in the delivery. The slightly raw production certainly gives it that 90s feel, we're not talking Westbeach Recorders and all the overpolished diluted punk crap here - SPIT actually benefit from the ragged edge that the production gives them. After the second listen I was already nodding along to the choruses on here. Cool political lyrics and great artwork from the guy behind Rad Party zine top off this inspiringly DIY record. *(RR)*
SMALL BUDGET, BP No. 7, 78110 Le Vesinet Cedex, France.

SPONTANEOUS ASSASSIN, THE - "Write Off the World" 7".
Two tracks of sloppy punk rock grunge. It sort of reminds me of NIRVANA with more punk aggression - it's the combination of minor-chord verses (with that Cobain-esque guitar fx) and full-on power-chord verses with shouted vocals. The singing is okay when it's yelled, but when sung it wavers in and out of key. This just sounds like a record released too early in a band's life. *(RR)*
WHORTH, PO Box 119, South Sterling, PA 18460, USA.

STELLENBOSCH - "We Used To Build Towers in the Basement" CD/ 10:50.
Now this is impressive. The disc is packaged in a custom-printed A5 envelope made from recycled Dutch maps, which has a checklist on the front for what's included; the band name, format, song titles, musicians etc. and of course a space for your address. Inside this envelope is an A6 art booklet, stickers, two more custom-printed envelopes with letters inside (one to send to the band for more info and another seems to petition a Dutch politician...) and of course the disc itself. Still not finished though, the disc is sealed in a genius origami arrangement that holds it tightly as well as containing more pertinent information. The music on the disc is screamed but jangly, and bitterly passionate - like a collision of SERENE, JR EWING and BOOKS LIE. There's even a little classic NATIVE NOD wailing in amongst the frantic melodies at times. This is an absolutely incredible package and I find the effort that the band has put into it totally inspiring. I can only recommend that you see for yourself. *(RR)*
www.alaskaontwerpers.nl/roel/stellenbosch/

STEREO, THE - "Rewind + Record" CD/ 42:41.
How is it possible for a band to be so cool and uncool at the same time? THE STEREO rock my world, and are by far the most exciting, new, original and highly unoriginal band I've heard this year. The cheesy 80s cover gives a hint of what's to come but opener "Dear Fans of the Stereo" doesn't give anything away with it's typically emo breaks. "Pay No Attention" is more soaring with a down-hearted singalong chorus and unforgiving guitar solo, but "Don't Say Uncle" shows THE STEREO at their most infectious and unusual best. Think of the most 80s KOUFAX songs you know (without the keyboards), add some BILLY JOEL and crank it up. THE STEREO is mostly the baby of Jamie Woolford and he's obviously got a retro thing going on, but it's a hundred times better than anything retro out there. This CD goes from rock to chocky pop and is worth a thousand listens, and each time the lyrics are more memorable. It's hard not to love the cheese on here. It might sound frightening to begin with but it's not long before this is just another favourite indie rock CD ready for your arena. *(HE)*
DEFIANCE, Ritterstrasse 52, 50668 Koln, Germany.

STRIKING DISTANCE - "The Fuse Is Lit" CD/ 43:21.
One of the more fucked-off and bitter Bridge Nine bands, STRIKING DISTANCE punch and kick their way through 6 new tracks and a live set from CBGB's (where else?). They play angry old school hardcore with none of the gimmicks many of their peers opt for. The vocals follow the same direct, stripped down delivery, and lyrics are about politicians, backing words up with actions, and keeping your enemies close. The live set has a really good sound too, capturing SD'S energy and rage well. *(SM)*
BRIDGE NINE, PO Box 990052, Boston, MA 02199-0052, USA.

STRIKING DISTANCE - "March To Your Grave" CD/ 21:48.
I know their name for some reason, but this is my first time hearing them and I'm hooked. Fastish youth crew styled hardcore, with a feel like it's straight from the heart. The lyrics, although they seem scene related, are fucking excellent. Lots of fast thrashers, with compulsory crucial breakdowns. Could easily have been on one of those early Rev bands. *(MH)*
THORP, PO Box 2007, Upper Darby, PA 19082, USA.

STRYDER, THE - "Jungle City Twitch" CD/ 64:37.
I think you're looking at another potential "big band" here for sure. The opener is a very appealing track if you like FAIRWEATHER, SAVES THE DAY and even that band JIMMY EAT WORLD, etc. *but*... this also has something a bit different that may actually work against them in these "strip it down and make it airplay-able" times. It is, however, still very poppy and rocky and is still going to appeal heavily to emotionally distraught 19 year old kids with thick rimmed specs and no understanding of the real world - that's something I can tell you! Overall, this is the best of the bunch this month, so to speak, but it's still just "punk / hardcore scene" rock that is becoming increasingly more mainstream as time goes on. *(MD)*
EQUAL VISION, PO Box 14, Hudson, NY 12534, USA.

SUGARSHACK - "Spinning Wheels" CD/ 32:54.
Ass kicking Garage Punk stomp from these hell raisers, who are the epitome of the primeval vibes Estrus Records has been sticking to us for all these years. SUGERSHACK belt out sterling trash-o-rama, that's aided greatly by Mark's loud snarling vocals, delivered in time honoured belligerent fashion - like he don't give a sheeettt!!! The other prize asset is drummer girl Stefanie's serious skin pounding... letting up for nothing. Full on. SUGARSHACK declare themselves as "Houston Proud", so no surprise to note production duties are handled by their close neighbour, from Austin, Tim Kerr, who I was just reading some wise words by (on the BAD BRAINS/MDC 'Texas incident') in the "American Hardcore" book. The guy's a ledge. And SUGARSHACK sure cooks up a storm. *(PC)*
ESTRUS, PO Box 2125, Bellingham, WA 98227, USA.

SUNSHINE - "Necromance" CD/ 38:44.
Necromance is one of those words that appeals to teenagers going through a dark period. Remember CARCASS ("Necroticism: Descanting the Insalubrious" - loved that title!)? The word pretty much sums up the phase SUNSHINE are going through. The Czech noiseniks have got a YOUNG GODS meets ...TRAIL OF DEAD thing going on. Mixing a YOUNG GODS revival with modern cacophony could be the beginning of something new. There's a a lot of anger, swearing and metal in this release but against all odds I think it rocks. *(HE)*
DAY AFTER, PO Box 153, 35201 AS, Czech Republic.

SUNSHINE - "Hysterical Loops, Beasts and Bloody Lips" CD/ 43:31.
This is apparently a remastered CD version of SUNSHINE's sold out second album, only released on LP and accompanied by three extra tracks - one new and the others from split 7"s - and with a new title (it used to be "Hysterical Loops, Beats and Bloody Lips". Whatever title you pick, it's chaotic and like a fist-fight in an electrical store. Neo-sexual, to their own admission, and hysterical, the sounds aren't as immediate as "Necromance" but it has it's own cat-in-a-blender charm. *(HE)*
DAY AFTER, PO Box 153, 35201 AS, Czech Republic.

SWEEP THE LEG JOHNNY - "Going Down Swinging" CD/ 50:32.
I'd been looking forward to hearing this band for a good while and they haven't let me down. Chicago's STLJ are fucking awesome! For anyone who doesn't know 'em they play sometimes abrasive, sometimes beautiful jazz / fusion / angular post rock... kinda thing. For me the fundamental reason that I like this records so much is that it is living proof that real musical exploration and top class musical ability is truly alive in underground / punk music. There are no panderings to fashion or blinkered generics going on in this little disc, oh no! From heart-palpitating horn runs, not the ska-punk kind of horns either, to some of the spikiest rhythms this side of SHELLAC, inter-spliced with the most beautiful melodies I've heard in a while. All this and they must have the coolest name in rock to boot! *(JD)*
SOUTHERN, PO Box 59, London, N22 TAR, England.

TEAR IT UP - "Tear It Down : The December 2000 Session" CD/ 18:57.
19 songs, 18 minutes - perfect! Look, if you didn't get these singles first time around ("Zero to Suicidal", split with ETA, split with FAST TIMES) then get this now! If you read their interview in the last issue of Fracture, you'll know these guys are pissed off to the max, and this comes across in their music - fast hardcore, great back-ups, killer lyrics that are splashed in healthy doses of cynisism ('Thrash Wagon') and politics ('EZ Pass = EZ Control') and whe it comes down to it, TEAR IT UP pretty much blow all those other motherfuckers right outta the water. Even 'thrashtastic' doesn't cut the mustard here, these guys are better than that! *(MD)*
COALITION, Newtonstraat 22, 2562 KW Den Haag, The Netherlands.

TEKULVI - "In Recognition of Your Significant Accomplishments" CD/ 25:10.
This great. Unsettling, off-beat, swirling, mesmerising rock from Chicago's Tekulvi. Damn I'd love to get over to that city. It seems to be a hotbed of jazz/post/rock/stuff what with the likes of SWEEP THE LEG JOHNNY and others whose names escape me at the moment. Christ, the guy's shouts on track two are enough to scare anyone, that's what I like, well put shouts mixed with the kind of off centre dischordancies that would put the shits up the toughest of guys or the.blackest of metallers. "Break a sweat! Break a sweat! Break a sweat!" *(JD)*
DIVOT, PO Box 14061, Chicago, IL 60614-006, USA.
www.divitrecords.com

THE BEAUTIFUL MISTAKE - Self Titled CD/ 18:04.
I'm assuming that they're from California as it was recorded there (there's no address) but it sounds vocally as if it's a European guy singing in English... ya know, in that POP UNKNOWN / BRANDTSON fashion, or am I the only fool who hears that? Actually, this fits right in the same ballpark as the aforementioned bands, maybe not up to the perfect heights that those bands have reached, but this ain't bad at all. Sweet and emotional, at times fairly basic maybe, but this definitely has the *"in-sound"* of emo pop. If you can imagine OTHERWISE and SUNFACTOR mixing it up a little then you come to this. Oh, one song has the obligatory bad vocal shout outs in the background... how old has that become? A minor blemish on a sweet record that the girls will like I'm sure. *(DS)*
SIDE CHO / sidechorec@aol.com

THIRTY-TWO FRAMES - Self Titled CD/ 20:37.
This is excellent stuff indeed, old school late 80s US hardcore in the style that seems to have been diluted somewhat these days. Don't fear however, as these Kentucky dudes go back to basics, mixing EMBRACE style vocals with DAG NASTY style guitar riffage and healthy dose of speed and anger. Lyrics are intelligent, vocals strong and shouty, but retaining melody. The only downside to this EP is the unnecessary Tom Petty cover as the hidden track... I sat listening to the silence waiting for something like a NO FOR AN ANSWER or a 7 SECONDS cover to kick in, all I got was Tom *bloody* Petty! I digress, this is superb and if you feel bands like MOVIELIFE had taken the edge off of melodic hardcore then check this out. This is the music that Revelation was founded upon, it's good to see them still having belief in this style, this is one to pick up believe me. *(DS)*
REVELATION, PO Box 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615-5232, USA.

THIS AIN'T VEGAS - "Funeral on Tuesday" 7".
Been a while in coming, but THIS AIN'T VEGAS' debut 7" is out and it happened just in time to accompany their UK tour with ROBOTS that seemed to impress so many people. And on the strength of these three tracks, as well as the gig that I caught, it's really no surprise because this is fucking great. The title track rolls along constantly dropping the tempo and building it up again into a forceful and driving chorus with a chord progression that works so well. Think Q AND NOT U with added rock. The two flipside tracks continue where "Funeral on Tuesday" left off, with "100 mph" bringing it a little FUGAZI dexterity in the choppy riffs and dual sung / shouted vocals, along with a few drum fills worthy of any 70's rock giant. "Ask the Time" even mixes a little blues and groove driven jangle into the rock, all to great effect. Clear vinyl, screened card sleeves, superb music, and they're Sunderland boys too. You've got the lot here. *(RR)*
JEALOUS, PO Box 321, Leeds, LS6 3YT, UK.

THIS MACHINE KILLS / JR EWING - Split 7" & CDEP/ 15:05.
I thought this was a vinyl only release, but here it is on snazzy 3" etched onto a 5"Cd malarkey. Very swish. Ok it is a recognized fact that both of these bands are pretty smart, that I won`t dispute. However I think the material on here is pretty weak. The 1st TMK song is alright but doesn't grab me like the 7" did and the 2nd song is some dreadful attempt at dance music. I have nothing against dance music but have you ever heard a hardcore band have a good take on it. Remember INK AND DAGGER's effort? Same here, fucking garbage. JR EWING get me going a bit more but I think the two songs on here are still pretty mediocre when you compare it to some of the awesome damage they`ve done in the past like the 10". The second song `Holiday Narcotic` is the better of the two but I just don`t get it. This could`ve been an amazing split. As for the artwork, sheesh it`s vile and then some. Bright yellow with (well thought out) white writing so you can`t tell what the hells going on. Two bands who can definitely do better. Go track down the JR EWING `singles` CD or the 10" and then you`ll know this band kill. *(FU)*
WAKUSEI, PO Box 3064, South Croydon, OR2 7DE, UK.

TIME IN MALTA - "A Second Engine" CD/ 56:23
Remember when CAVE IN just started getting 'progressive' (before they turned into PINK FLOYD) when the melodic vocals had started creeping in, but weren't too overbearing. Well that's a useful yardstick to gauge TIME IN MALTA'S sound, except they seem a lot more comfortable and consistent with it, slipping into intricate GUILT territory in places, and then hitting right back at you with total WILL HAVEN style chaos and rage. I only hope they don't lose their heavy edge and wander off the track completely, because this stuff rocks. *(SM)*
EQUAL VISION, PO Box 14, Hudson, NY 12534, USA.

U.B.R. - "Yugoslavia Panic" 7" EP.
Great to see this bands stuff see the light of day, as these songs were originally recorded in 1983. I've got the MRR "Welcome To 1984" which is a world wide comp and these guys were on it. Raw hardcore from the early 80's, this is a real history lesson. Excellent and knocking the spots of so many so called hardcore bands today. *(MH)*
CRUST WAR, 1-28-3A. Shikitsu, Nishi 2, Naniwa-Ku, Osaka City, 556-0017, Japan.

UK SUBS - "Drunken Sailor" 7".
This is so horrible and I have to wonder who on earth would think it a good idea? Yep, it's that old sea shanty which rugby players have taken to loftier heights than this over the years. I couldn't get through it... it stopped then started again and I was looking for my hammer before I quickly whipped the stylus away from the offending grooves. The B-side is a fairly recent SUBS number *"Reclaim The Streets"* which is alright, but the bass playing is all over the shop, it really sounds as if the bass player overdubbed the bass whilst in a drunken stupor under the belief that he was Matt Freeman of RANCID! He's not, add to that some strange, what I believe is French, background talking and you've got one crappy tune to back up an even crappier one! To say this 7"s sucks is doing an injustice to sucking, because on occasion, sucking can be good, very good. This can only and will ever be pure shite. *(DS)*
CAPTAIN Oi!, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, HP10 8QA, UK.

UK SUBS - "Universal" CD/ 37:59.
For those who may not know, the UK SUBS have been releasing albums in alphabetical order since the late 1970s starting with "Another Kind of Blues" and twenty odd years later, here they are serving up an album under the letter "U". That's a lot of records and to be honest I've not heard any of them since "Flood of Lies", I guess that omits me as a fan! Saying that, I've heard the odd track over recent years and been fairly impressed. So how does this album fare? Well, pretty good actually. They have a nice bouncy punk rock style, the songs are mostly pacey affairs with sing-a-long choruses. There's some nice guitar work, Charlie Harper's vocals are the same as ever, ragged and fairly tuneless, but with a certain rogueish charm. Lyrically they aren't very imaginative, oh sure, they have the correct punk rock intentions, but it's a little obvious; "Papers lie", "I hate Hollywood", "Third world England"... you catch my drift? This is a good strong punk rock album mind you, it matches and in a lot of cases surpasses most of the 82 style punk that's coming out of the States right now, which is good to see as the UK SUBS are one of the most influential punk bands of all time. This wasn't half as bad as I was expecting, especially after hearing the new 7", which really was quite awful. If they make it to "Z" then they have another 5 albums to produce... on this showing I reckon they have a fair bit of battery life left in 'em yet! Not bad, not bad at all. *(DS)*
CAPTAIN Oi!

ULTIMATE FAKEBOOK - "Open Up and Say Awesome" CD/ 41:29.
Here's a well-connected band. Friends Matt Pryor and James Dewees from THE GET UP KIDS appear on a couple of tracks and Stephen Egerton donates a guitar solo. I can't deny that was the reason for picking this up and giving it a fair play, but in the end it doesn't give them any favours apart from a dedicated spot on bills supporting GET UP KIDS type bands. Not at all offensive and the kids will love it (cue Warped Tour slot) but as cheesy power pap goes it's full-on with lyrics such as "When I'm with you I'm OK, My skies are blue everyday" and "How can I make you see that you can't lose me, Cuz I'm still in love and want you for... Forever... Forever, So weird at first, but now I'm sure, I surrender". When the pace picks up on tracks like "Goddamn Dance Craze" and "Before You Leave" things get more promising. One of those bands to catch live and wait for the next record. *(HE)*
INITIAL, PO Box 17131, Louisville, KY 40217, USA.

UNIT - "Sons of The Dragon" CD/ 75:46.
This has to be one of the weirdest and probably challenging reviews that I've had to write so far. Why? Well according to the accompanying biography UNIT are *"aligned with the new progressive rock movement that is currently so popular in Japan and northern Europe... specialising in contemporary progressive rock with reference to traditional Chinese music, European pop music and European music cultures"*. I have to say, some of this has to be some of the most *retarded* sounding music I've *ever* heard! Now just because they describe themselves as prog rock I wouldn't hedge your bets on hearing the influences of PINK FLOYD, RUSH, JETHRO TULL or latter-day CAVE IN here! Imagine a bunch of kids who've met at a community youth project and between them not having a trace of good musical tastes or influences! Some of this sounds like strange '80's b-movie music (though intentionally, I doubt) with incredibly badly sung vocals overlaid all too prominently in the mix. Lyrically the sentiments are mostly admirable with such lines as *"respect your family everyday - that is the way to be"* as well as other topics as anti-communism, Chinese pride, and how hard 'Cambodian Kim' is (they are all into various styles of Kung Fu by the way, the biography lists each member and describes what belt colour they are!)... One of my favourites here has to be their self-proclaimed "punk rock anthem" 'Don't Do Drugs'. The lyrics here are incredible : *"Ecstasy - it makes you sad. Speed - it makes you slow. Acid - it makes you mad. Heroin - oh no no no"*!!! Again, admirable sentiments albeit delivered in rather a primal fashion. UNIT let themselves down here on the PC anti-drugs rant where they continue to say *"Glue - gives you chemical breath. Steroids - increase your chance of death. Valium - is even worse than beer. Amyl Nitrate - turns you queer!"* Hmmmmm. *(JD)*
UNIT / DNA, Box 4, 136 Kingsland High Street, London, E8 2NS, UK.

V/A - "20 Years of Dischord" 3 x CD & BOOK BOX SET.
Firstly, I have to thank Southern UK for sending me a copy for review. I know not many of these are getting sent out, and I went begging to them long ago for this so it's great to finally have it sitting here on my desk. Before I go any further, I'll just let you know that this is a good review. Well, it's the best review. This is quite simply an item that everyone from whatever fucking clique scene you're in nowadays should own. You liked MINOR THREAT? Pick it up. You prefer JAWBOX? Pick it up - it's as easy as that. Okay, so this package is already 2 years over due, but when you see just how much work has gone into it, you'll understand how this could have happened. Firstly, you've got CD 1 and CD 2 - 50 tracks from 50 bands, all previously released, all spanning Dischord's releases and everyone from TEEN IDLES to Q AND NOT U, from MARGINAL MAN to GOVERNMENT ISSUE, from FUGAZI to BLUETIP, from RITES OF SPRING to TRUSTY and from DAG NASTY to SLANT 6 get a track on one of these CD's. To say it's an *awesome* collection of bands would be an understatement. The third CD is what makes this package even more worthwhile - it's 23 unreleased (and some live) tracks from many of the older Dischord bands like MINOR THREAT, SCREAM, VOID, CIRCUS LUPUS and SLANT 6. The final track is an interview with some very young DC types and to top it off, this CD is also enhanced and has some neat Mpeg files from bands like TEEN IDOLS. It did, however, crash my computer! So if you think all that makes it worthwhile picking up, you'd be right of course but the real deal clincher is the 134 page booklet that comes with it. This booklet is just unbelievable. It's like watching the entire history of the Washington DC scene fold out in front of your eyes. From the front cover black

and white shot of Ian and Jeff sitting in the small home office in 1980 to the colour back cover shot of Ian and Jeff sitting in the same office 20 years later (mind boggling stuff!) this is just the most incredible, researched, informative and intriguing piece of work I've ever seen accompanying a record, ever. Each band gets a spead - a photo and a history / write-up. Seeing just how many people were in so many different bands is incredible. You also find out some other interesting stuff like that fact that EMBRACE only ever played 15 shows. The booklet ends with covers of Dischord 1 - 132, and some great photo's from the past and present, like a 2 page shot of all the people at Dischord, in what I guess is their head office. I just find that whole thing, of putting a human side to something as infamous as Dischord Records really fascinating. It gives you quite an insight into just how small and DIY an operation Dischord always was, and indeed still is. I don't really need to say anymore, just make sure you get this package when it comes out. Put it on your Christmas list or something! *(MD)*
DISCHORD, 3819 Beecher Street, NW Washington, DC 20007-1802, USA.

V/A - "Ain't Seen Nothing Yet" CD/ 34:04.
Japanese four-band sampler, and if I'd been expecting some COUNT FIVE style Psych-out from opening combo PSYCHOTIC REACTION, then boy - was I gonna be disappointed. A Mod'ish affair instead, although song #2 "My Fuzzy Computer" borrows heavily from the VIOLENT FEMMES, although song #3 "Comical Rage" is latter day JAM inspired and sets the record straight. LOVE AFFAIR next! A 3 piece who sport flat caps, Lonsdale sweats, and really do wanna be THE JAM, with Yousuke taking his best stab at being Weller. "Friday Night Station" is hilarious! Okay, now we're talking, BY YOUR LOVE look like a right buncha Charlie's, done up to the nines in their Carnaby Street smutter, and one of them actually has a Lambretta, hurrah! But does he always keep it in his bedroom?? Competent Power Pop, with barely intelligible English sung vocals. "Don't Forget" is the pick of their 3 numbers. RADICAL UP to close, boring song #1, at least #2 is livelier - a sax driven knees up, but more plod, plod, plod to finish. *(PC)*
SICK.

V/A - "Audio Flash Card" CD/ 72:59.
A new low priced sampler from the GOLD STANDARD LABRATORIES label that show cases all their weird and wonderful bands. From the funny electro-pop of openers BEAUTIFUL SKIN to the garage-y 'apres' rock of THE CONVOCATION OF makes for an incredibly varied listen. Especially when you get to DEAD AND GONE's excellent dirt-core and THE LOCUST's insane barrage of blast beats and sample chaos! Stand out bands for me have to be the afformentioned Dead And Gone aswell as I AM SPOONBENDER and The Convocation Of. Very cool stuff. *(JD)*
GOLD STANDARD LABRATORIES, PO Box 178282, San Diego, CA 92177, USA.

V/A - "Big Cheese Compilation" CD/ 40:21.
This free CD from BIG CHEESE magazine fell into my review pile so Dave figured, what the hey, review it anyway although I guess it's kind of redundant as you will only have this CD if you bought the magazine and if you bought the magazine you got the CD for free anyway so whether the disc is good or not is neither here nor there as if you like it, you like it, if you don't you don't but whatever, it was free, but anyway....as luck would have it for those who own it, this CD is great. A cool label sampler from HOUSEHOLD NAME (of London no less!) featuring tracks from many of it's bands like CAPDOWN, THE TAKE, FIVE KNUCKLE and CAPTAIN EVRYTHING as well as some guest bands like FIG 4.0 and THE FOAMERS. Hardcore / ska-rdcore-tastic. *(DM)*
HOUSEHOLD NAME.

V/A - "Bomb Threat" CD/ 73:13.
A nice compilation to document the punk scene of North and South Carolina in the states with all kinds of bands playing all genres of punk rock and showing the diversity of the Carolina scene. With the 31 bands on display here being, according to the liner notes, just the tip of the Carolina iceberg it seems that I now have many more reasons to dig Charlotte, North Carolina than the mere fact that the sixteen time world champion, wrestler Ric Flair comes from there which before I heard this CD was the area's only claim to fame! In conclusion, this release receives a big Whoooooooo of support from me! *(DM)*
SUICIDE WATCH, PO Box 9599, Charlotte, NC, 28299, USA.

V/A - "Bullets Over Borderland" CD/ 61:52.
The Borderland in question is where Germany, Belgium and Holland meet - and this comp documents the scene around there, taking in virtually every punk subculture in it's hour, from skinhead to indie-rock, from metallic hardcore to psychobilly and all points in between. Being a local comp then, the quality varies quite a bit but most of the stuff on this comp seems to be here of it's own worth, rather than because they just came from the right area. Obvious highlights come from PALE and ENGRAVE but there's plenty of others bands to entertain you such as PENCILCASE, EAVES, LIGHTSOME, SKIPPY, DODEN'S PILAR, SIGNPOST, SUGARBOMBS etc. Also comes with a fat booklet with lyrics and info for each band. This comp is probably better aimed at the people involved in the Aachen and environs scene but hey, if you want to check it out, then by all means... *(RR)*
ROCKSTAR, Verbindungstr 9, 52080 Aachen, Germany.

V/A - "Does Everyone Stare?" CD/ 73:54
A comp from Boss Tuneage's Canadian sister label Does Everyone Stare, so a lot of the bands are already going to be familiar to anyone who keeps in touch with Boss T's workload. Kicks off with THE MILWAUKEES "Drink Soviet Champagne" which truly is one of the best rock songs around these days, hits me every time. Most bands contribute a couple of tracks with a few unreleased ones between them such as WOOLWORTHY'S superb rock 'n' rolling "Wallflower" and MANIFESTO JUKEBOX's raging "Trail" from their split 7" with I EXCUSE. Other familiar bands are THE UNKNOWN, JOSHUA, PUNCHBUGGY, THE TANK, POCKET GENIUS, MICO, HIGH LO FI, RHYTHM COLLISION and with the UK 'done right proud' by BLOCKO - all of them serving up slices of rocking melodies. A nice thick booklet provides info on each band featured on here too. Rock to it. *(RR)*
DOES EVERYONE STARE (in UK from BOSS TUNEAGE)

V/A - "Drunk Fools vs True Til Death" CD/ 52:06
Four bands here two from each side of the fence, drunks vs. edgers. Pretty good idea actually, I mean just because you don`t drink doesn't mean you should avoid drunks and vice versa. It matters not one bit. Anyways first up are I SHOT CYRUS from Sao Paulo, who`re pretty raging. Thrash-tastic stuff and if you like your emphasis on the Latino this will please your ears. Great name and Stealing from the film WARRIORS is always a winner. Next up are MERDA who I`ve reviewed elsewhere and some of the songs on here are from that CD. They are nuts I give them that and I`d love to know what their song called E.M.O is on about. This stuff is faster paced than the CD, which is good. MERDA are definitely drunks! JAZZUS are pretty heavy shit, over the top grind with loads of chaotic drumming and screaming along with a wall of noise on the guitar front. Loads of energy and I can imagine them slaying me in the live environment. There`s a picture of some guy wearing a JAZZUS t-shirt pissing on a guy in a wheelchair though so fuck knows what that`s all about. I can`t read their lyrics unfortunately. I guess they could well be the other `drunk` band. EVIL IDOLS are pretty rock n roll in their approach but still very punk, they have the most structured songs on here by a mile and are pretty cool in a sing-a-long way with some good guitar licks. They`re also the only band on here to have English lyrics which are all pretty R n` Roll (cars etc).All in all a decent little comp from Brazil. *(FU)*
Possibly through LAJA.

V/A - "Emo Diaries 8: My Very Last Breath" CD/ 47:38.
Latest instalment and what I'm actually beginning to like about the Emo Diaries series is that they're no longer predictable. Just like the label, there's a much broader coverage of styles these days which is a good thing. I might not actually enjoy all of those styles but I'd rather be surprised and expectant than bored and desensitized. Kicks off with the excellent KELLY8 from Sweden whose demo impressed the fuck out of me when it arrived out of the blue a few months ago - high-quality post-hardcore in the MILEMARKER vein with strong female vocals. This band will go further. Other highlights for me include THE COLOUR BLUE who mix a sax in with their brooding rock to great effect, A SEASON DRIVE who do the whole slow-burning CHRISTIE FRONT DRIVE thing pretty damn well and THE HOME TEAM playing a sad and sweet pop song reminiscent of THE WEAKERTHANS with a deeper sound. I'll not bother listing the other bands on here because the point of comps like this is to introduce you to bands you've probably never have heard of before. I mean, it's an Emo Diaries compilation - you know the deal. *(RR)*
DEEP ELM.

V/A - "Estrus Double Dyn-O-Mite" CD/ 73:50.
Follow up to the "100% Ape Shit" sampler of 2000, and I tell ya, screw all that Garage bullshit that the 'majors' are peddling... I mean c'mon - THE VINES for fucks sakes!!! Seriously friends, that ain't RocknRoll. Take it from me. You want some street-smart gear then this is a label to qualify. And like the title on the cover says, plenty of Dyn-o-mite, right here.... FATAL FLYING GUILLOTEENS (as manic as you'd expect), FEDERATION X, FIREBALLS OF FREEDOM, GAS HUFFER, MAN or ASTROMAN? IMMORTAL LEE COUNTY KILLERS (go Chet go!), MONKEYWRENCH, GASOLINE, THE SOLEDAD BROTHERS (righteous), CHERRY VALENCE and winding up proceedings THE TOTAL SOUND GROUP DIRECT ACTION COMMITTEE, a Hammond organ drenched low-down dirty combo that reunites Tim Kerr with Mike Carroll, singer in their long-past band POISON 13. Swell. *(PC)*
ESTRUS, PO Box 2125, Bellingham, WA 98227, USA.

V/A - "Every Dog Will Have It's Day; Adeline Records Comp #2" CD/ 49:40.
A really nice label sampler here from Billie Joe Amstrong's label with a lot of cool tracks from all the Adeline bands. At first I was upset the GREEN DAY song "Ha Ha You're Dead" wasn't a cover of the FAITH NO MORE song of the same name because that would be the weirdest thing ever heard, but then I realised that the FAITH NO MORE song didn't have the same name at all and is actually called "Surprise You're Dead" and that I was totally wrong and that it would be even weirder still if the GREEN DAY song "Ha Ha You're Dead" turned out to be a cover of a FAITH NO MORE tune that didn't even share it's name! Also, the singer of THE INFLUENTS sounds so like Billie Joe it is unfunny, but apart from that this is really good compilation, my favourite track being COMMON RIDER's strangely BAD RELIGION sounding "Blackbirds Vs Crows". *(DM)*
ADELINE.

V/A - "False Object Sensor" LP.
This is the vinyl version of the Vermiform comp that celebrates, uh, 11.5 years of Vermiform's existence, which is a bit unnerving since I remember buying the "Murders Among Us" comp 7" and early BORN AGAINST 7"s and it only seems like 3 or 4 years ago. Cripes. Now what this isn't is a sampler of Vermiform, it's more like a collection of songs that define times and places for Sam McPheeters, so in that sense do I forgive him for starting it off with the complete dung that is BAD NEIGHBOUR POLICY recording on a tape player in their bedroom? No I don't. Likewise, I don't forgive him for more of the crap on here that some people pretend to like and will continue to no matter how ridiculously piss-takey the sounds become - see TARA TAVI , MUTICIAN, AMPS FOR CHRIST et al as reference. It must be the most "in" of in-jokes because some of this really is beyond bad as the hilarious liner notes often admit. However, things are relieved for the rest of us by the inclusion of HEROIN (covering BATTALION OF SAINTS no less), SKULL KONTROL, MOSS ICON, CONVOCATION OF... (sounding better than their album in this short burst), THRONES and HAIL MARY. I can appreciate that this is something of a life diary for Sam, and that Vermiform never set out make definable music, but the quality on here is patchy to say the least. When it's good it's raging, but when bad, it's dismal. Bring back the days of "Nine Patriotic Hymns...". *(RR)*
X-MIST (in UK: www.traqueto.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk)

V/A - "Go On Dive In!" CD-R/ 34:08.
I assume that this is either a cheap sampler or a giveaway disc for the bands involved? Anyway. 11 bands and 11 tracks showcasing the diversity and quality of this middle England label. A great way to familiarise yourself with the labels roster, all the bands are great and I was most surprised to see the JAILCELL RECIPES on here! Apparently there's a CD out this winter of rare, live and unreleased songs from this old UK band. From the pop punk of LOVEJUNK (this is the same version of this song that I heard in '97... how queer) to the abrasive grind of The DEVILS, through the emo-tastic rocking rhythms of OSTERMAN WEEKEND and up to the melodic hardcore of STEEL RULES DIE... there's something for everyone here and you should go check out the releases these songs are taken from. NewsFlash! I just got told that the OSTERMAN WEEKEND broke up last night - that's bad news. *(DS)*
IN AT THE DEEP END, 82 Barlow Drive South, Awsworth, NG16 2TD, UK.

V/A - "HITS 2002" CD/ 19:02.
I guess folks were given this when they entered the *Holidays In The Sun* three day music festival this Summer past. Seven new (but released) tracks by The BUSINESS, ARGY BARGY, ANGELIC UPSTARTS, UK SUBS, ADICTS, SPECIAL DUTIES and The GUITAR GANGSTERS. Some of these bands have been around since the late 70s and have had their finest hour, but I like hearing the new stuff in small doses. SPECIAL DUTIES, well their singer replied to a letter I wrote to them in 1982 and told me I should check out SOCIAL DISTORTION and DOA... little did I know that by taking his advice I would spend the next 20 years into US punk rock! Thanks Steve! The GUITAR GANGSTERS are awful and The BUSINESS rule on here. You don't need this but it's a pretty cool freebee. *(DS)*
CAPTAIN Oi / www.captainoi.com

V/A - "Howling Noise Crusties From Gates Of Hell" 7".
Given the title, this is what you get. Three crust bands from Japan, namely CONTRAST ATTITUDE, ALIVE and DECEIVING SOCIETY. All the bands are actually really good. My fave on this is ALIVE, although the other two rock big time too. *(MH)*
MCR, 157 Kamiague Maizuru, Kyoto 624-0913, Japan.

V/A - "Keith's Kompilation" 2 x CD/ 62:58 + 52:26.
Double CDR monster comp packaged in a DVD amaray case (the plastic ones...) of mainly DIY music - as in genuine DIY, as in made at home on the whole. Musically, we're talking everything from lo-fi grind through to casiotone drum machines and go-go pop ditties. There's a few 'proper' bands (how horribly snobbish of me!) represented here too (GRAMPUS 8, DINA, REDBANK, WISH UPON A STAR, THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY... etc.) who occasionally rock out in amongst the eclectic chaos of bands like EURO SLUT, JOEY MOMSAWHORE, HONEY SHOP SCREAMERS, THE SCREECH POWERS EXPRESSWAY, PLAGUE OF VERMIN, THE FLUFFY PUSSIES etc. Very much a Liverpool thing going on here if you hadn't already guessed. Also comes with an info sheet so you can contact the bands, get them over to your town and weird your mates out. DIY as you like. *(RR)*
KEITH / www.keithrecords.net

V/A - "Kopf: Horen!" LP.
A German compilation that may possibly be based around all-female bands, but everything is in German so I might be completely fucking wrong about that. In which case I hereby apologise to any men in these bands. Although I can't apologise for the fact that I hardly found anything of interest on here, being as most it is electronic music that either sounds like bad NEW ORDER, bad NURSE WITH WOUND or just plain bad. KOCHEN MIT GLAS deliver a blast of screamed chaotic noise, BESSER spit out an acerbic hardcore drawl with garagey dirtiness, SCHLAMPEN FICKEN do a scraping indie-noise thing and THE FLAMINGO MASSACRES supply a live song of their dual-bass jazz-hardcore. The rest I'm afraid are just highly uninspiring. Nice screened covers though. *(RR)*
frequenzpark@yahoo.de

V/A - "Love Still Has its Meaning" CD/ 73:29.
Huge comp of mainly German emo/post hardcore bands, that is also a benefit for an organisation that looks after handicapped people, called Lebenshilfe. There are 20 bands on here, as with almost all compilations there are a few cracks, but overall this is a superbly put together document of bands that you might not check out otherwise. Some bands you may of heard of are REST OF MY LIFE, MORNING BEFORE, SKY PROMISES RAIN, LANDMINE SPRING and the band that opens proceedings is Italy's MILES APART. A professional job for sure, with excellent sound and a great looking booklet with info/lyrics and pictures of the bands involved. The quality of the bands is high too, yep, a strong compilation for sure. Worth checking out if that post hardcore/emo trip is your tipple. *(DS)*
MILLIPEDE, Kohlfurterstrasse 2, 90473 Nurnberg, Germany.

V/A - "Loved By Few... Hated By Most" 7".
Pretty awesome comp here that has D.R.I. stamped all over it, all the songs are short, fast, furious and excellent quality. The bands are: MILKMAN, BURY THE LIVING, CRISPUS ATTUCKS, DANDARE, BREZHNEV, BLURTERS, A.V.O., SOMETHING IN THE WATER, ANGER IN MOTION and JESUS AND THE GOSPELFUCKERS. I'll tell you, Henke-aroo knows how to pick some awesome bands, and there isn't one duff song on this. *(MH)*
KANGAROO, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA Amsterdam, Holland.

V/A - "Peely : Man of the Years" CD-R/ 73:52.
This is great, I mean everyone I grew up with used to tape John Peel shows and use them as an educational tool for underground music research. John Peel was and is the last bastion of commercial radio. This is a great idea, someone has compiled a compilation of favourite Peely bits circa '78 / '79 and along with some fine music from the likes of CRASS, TELEVISION PERSONALITIES, WEIRDOS and many, many more, you also get Peely's superb commentary, which is what makes this much more than your standard compilation. I don't know who the people are who put this out, but here's a huge pat on the back to you as I have thoroughly enjoyed this piece of nostalgic radio history. The liner notes are excellent and this is true labour of love. ***Addendum:*** How bizarre, an old friend just got in touch and sent me details on his new CD-R projects and this is one of them, along with releases of old Brazillian hardcore bands and an old Dutch band. Quite a shock as I just got the package through, some 2 weeks after writing the original review. *(DS)*
nochargenoprofit@hotmail.com

V/A - "Playing 4 Square 2" CD/ 70:01.
A nice sampler here of bands from four labels, Suburban Home, Polyvinyl, Fueled By Ramen, and Drive Thru. A good mix of styles, poppy stuff, emo stuff, harder stuff, softer stuff with bands such as GAMITS, DISCOUNT, MOVIELIFE, BLUELINE MEDIC and COUNTERFEIT amongst others. A good all-rounder with something for everyone. *(DM)*
SUBURBAN HOME.

V/A - "Pop For Charity : Sound Progression" CD/ 72:54.
A nice mix of styles here in this compilation from Minneapolis based charity POP FOR CHARITY, a group who support artists, communities and other worthwhile causes, but even with the stylistic diversity this 20 track album does seem to go on a bit too long with too few stand out tracks to maintain interest. DILLINGER FOUR doing a cover of MOTORHEAD's "No Voices In The Sky" is my favourite track but it's the first song, and by the end of this dragging collection even that is just a faded memory. But hey, it's for charity so I guess it does have that going for it. *(DM)*
DOUBLEPLUSGOOD, PO Box 18721, Minneapolis, MN, 55418, USA.

V/A - "Punk-O-Rama #7" CD/ 61:08.
I hate cheap sampler CDs and you know why? I hate them because, materially and technically they are no different from normal full price CDs and they simply rub your face in the fact that labels could easily afford to price their full-lengths much, much more cheaply than they do. CDs cost piss to make and even at a low price CDs will turn a profit...these cheap samplers demystify the convention we have developed of assuming full length CDs should cost us near fifteen quid and yet no one who buys them and sees that good CDs can be produced and sold nearer to five quid than fifteen seem to recognize how much the music industry is ripping them off most of the time with CD prices! Anyway, it's Punk-O-Rama, you know the drill, bunch of Epitaph bands doing a song each and a few exclusives so you can see what wares Epitaph have on offer this season and as it's cheap you'll buy it even though this particular edition of the Punk-O-Rama series has the most negligible of unheard tracks and the most dull of inlays ever. But what's on there is good stuff, so if for some reason you haven't heard any of the bands on here I guess you should check it out, but if you have, you're better off just buying the albums you want than this effortless release. *(DM)*
EPITAPH.

V/A - "Rydell / San Geronimo / A Rocket Sent to You" Split CD/ 39:26.
What's with three-way split CD's? Do I file them as various artists or what? Actually it doesn't matter so much with this disc because on the first few listens I could hardly tell all three bands apart - I actually had to keep checking which track number I was on to see if a different band had started yet. Anyway RYDELL are up first and play two of their customary mid-paced indie-rock tracks that's okay but still lacks a vital spark in it's broody sounds. Much better is their third track with its pianos and female vocals, it shows more layers and innovation than their other two tracks put together. Up next are SAN GERONIMO who I seriously cannot believe are ex-LIFETIME because this isn't a patch on that great band. Whereas LIFETIME were full of fire, energy and an addictive urgency, this is just average indie-rock with a pretty thin production. It's not bad, but really, it's nothing astounding either. ARSTY are better with much more innovation in their sound - some nice rhythm shifts, jangling guitars, rocking build-ups and vocals with much more energy than either of the other bands, especially when they're underpinned by shouted back-ups. They exhibit a much greater skill of contrasting songwriting too - taking it from the driving rock of "The Law of Entropy" to the subdued pop of "The Dead Sea". Three bands then, all doing the same thing but A ROCKET SENT TO YOU showing the way. *(RR)*
IGNITION, PO Box 333, Margate, Kent, CT9 2FY, UK.

V/A - "Sampler No. 1" CD/ 71:09.
OK, This was probably not the right CD to send to me! Seventeen bands, seventeen 'indie' bands in the main and that's being kind to them! Fuck me! This CD starts with a band called GIANT SPIDER who's track is over five minutes long and most bands I like have cranked out four tracks in that time! Apart from STUNTFACE who I've heard before all the bands were new to me and basically fucking awful to my 'Punk only ears'! Here's a list of them, ISLANDER SIDEKICK, MY DAD IS BIG, 40 ODD YARDS, POTVIN, SPANKED MONKEYS, NUSPHERE, 3Dbs DOWN, GODLESS REDS, WAKE UP RUFUS, FINAL THOUGHT, MRS DOMINIC, EMPATHY, LUSHUS and NIMBUS. Sorry kids, not a hit and unlikely to be played again so I'll send it to the first person who bothers to send me an SAE. *(GS)*
RUNNIN RIOT, 15 Denver Road, Dartford, DA1 3LA, UK.

V/A - "Shaken And Stirred, Vol 2" CD-R/ 53:27.
Apparently some of the bands Charlene's been putting on her next compilation CD sent her a whining email about actually having to chip in and help with distroing it. It's funny how bands are keen to snap up a free plug for their band, but then when they realise that they might have to actually put in some of their own time, money, and effort into it, they show their true colours. Oh well, I'm sure they'll fuck off and get signed to Walt Disney and have the label serve them their every meal on a silver plated table forged together from the bones of countless DIY punk kids and leave the rest of us to it. Anyway, this CD boasts some current hardcore bands from the UK and elsewhere. The strongest tracks are by Grimsby hopefuls STAND, the churning weight of THIRTY SECONDS UNTIL ARMAGEDDON, the menacing 50 CALIBER, the evil LINDEN HEY and CRY FOR SILENCE (a track featuring their old vocalist who now fronts BREAKING DAYS). This is a good introduction to a wide range of hardcore and metal bands, and is cheap-as-you-like as it's a CD-R, so check it out. *(SM)*
LIFE SUPPORT, 1/L, 6 Montague Street, Kelvinbridge, Glasgow, G4 9HX, Scotland.

V/A - "Suburban Life Sentence" CD/ 72:24.
It says on the cover of this compilation that the idea behind it is to put well known Punk bands with lesser known ones and gives the lesser known ones a chance to be heard. Well, there's twenty eight bands listed here! Has it worked? PENALTY BOX, INVERTED NINES, US BOMBS, LOW SCORE CITY, SHOWCASE SHOWDOWN, SMOGTOWN, THE DAMAGED, JUMPIN LAND MINES, DUANNE PETERS AND THE HUNNS, UNION OF THE DEAD, JIM DANDY, MOTHERFUCKERS, SMALLTOWN CRIMINALS, THE ROGUES, DEEP EYNDE, NAUZIA, RED FLAG 77, THE RESTARTS, VERY METAL, WEEKEND BOWLERS, THE BOILS, HOMEBREW, PINKERTON THUGS, THE VIRUS, THE DECLINE, ALL CHARGES DROPPED, SCHOOL HERO, CANDYSNATCHERS. Well I think it's worked a treat! The sentimental part of me says that this would be a great vinyl double LP release especially with the type of artwork used for the cover. Twenty years ago, this would have sold as a vinyl release in five figure numbers! *(GS)*
NO FRONT TEETH, PO Box 27070, London, N2 9ZP, UK.

V/A - "Sunrise People in Sunset Days" CD/ 30:48.
Another three-way split CD, this time between THE MILES APART, LIGHTS AT AMBER and MORNING BEFORE. As far as I'm concerned THE MILES APART can keep releasing records forever - their style never changes much from their customary driving ultra-melodic punk rock, but it's consistently excellent and light-years ahead of the plastic punk bands that we're drowning in right now. TMA play music that's genuinely infectious, piled full of sweaty enthusiasm and pop hooks to kill for. As far as I can tell these are unreleased tracks too -

they're certainly not on their excellent new "Storyboard" album. LIGHTS AT AMBER sound a little weak in comparison, at least until they've settled into their second song "When It's Gone" which soon picks things up with some passionate modern emo-rock with a sweet line in layering the vocals for maximum effect. The contrast of chugging and lead guitars works well too. Last up is MORNING BEFORE who suffer a little from a slightly flat production but more than compensate for it with their excellent melodic hardcore led by Julia's potent rocky vocals. Of particular note is their track "I Thought I Knew You" with it's mid-paced rolling rhythms and excellent female and male vocal interplay. Neat artwork for this disc backs up three bands that impressed the shit out of me. *(RR)*
STRANGE FRUIT, Silcherstr 31, 73329 Kuchen, Germany.

V/A - "The Pitz Vol. 2" CD/ 66:20.
I'm sure Milton Keynes is a lovely place for those who have never stepped on a plane or boat, I went there once and how much I liked it is evident by the term *"once"*. This is a comp of bands who play at the town's *"Premier Rock club"* The Pitz. As with most local area scenes, it's great if you're there but everyone everywhere else, has their own and they don't give a crystal shit about anywhere but home. This is a mixture of Kerrang! Wannabe rock, indie, nu metal... you name the latest few musical trends and there's a band on here practicing it! GRAVELTRAP play some decent pop punk with a bit of an edge, like early BLINKor MxPx, FOZZ are playing some 70's style mod rock, ODD MAN OUT are probably the pick of the bunch, melodic indie rock that shines a little more than anything else on here. This is good for their local scene, not exactly sure what purpose it serves... if they're trying to say *"Look at our great scene"* then I'm sorry, it means nothing to me nor anyone outside of MK. I would also like to comment on how utter shite the band names are... I'm just amazed there wasn't a band called CONCRETE COW or ROAD ISLAND... perhaps those names have been taken. This isn't a punk rock compilation, it's more like a sampler for the town's next Battle of The Bands rock comp. Whatever. *(DS)*
No label or address information.

V/A - "There's No Place Like Home" CD/ 68:04.
A document to showcase the music that has passed through Margate over the past four years and built that scene into what it is today. This is worth getting just for Paul's writing alone of why it exists, it'll make you glad you own it. Of course you'll be double-glad when you check the music because through the myriad styles covered, there's barely a duff track on here. AINA, JR EWING, ENDSTAND, CATHARSIS, BEEZEWAX, CANVAS, BABIES THREE, MONTH OF BIRTHDAYS, TUPAMAROS, LEIAH, GOOD CLEAN FUN, THE AUTUMN YEAR, ASSHOLE PARADE and plenty more make up the fine ranks, showing a varied but unremittingly good line-up. One of the highlights for me was actually the twelve minute track by Margate's own NORTH BY NORTHWEST - a great sprawling track taking in GODSPEED, ANTARCTICA and APPLESEED CAST all in one deep, deep breath. Also worthy of note is that most of these bands probably played in one of the UK's weirdest venues - The Lido. Ask anyone whose played there and they'll probably have a tale. *(RR)*
GEEK SCENE / geekscene@yahoo.co.uk

V/A - "This Is The Life - Vol 6" CD/ 46:26.
Another pretty wicked comp, full of Japanese bands, courtesy of MCR. Lots of different genres, grind, fastcore, anarcho punk etc. Bands featured this time are FOOD FOR THOUGHT, STUBBORN FATHER, SOCIETY ATTACK, WHO AM and stacks and more. *(MH)*
MCR, 157 Kamiagu Maizuru, Kyoto 624-0913, Japan.

V/A - "Unreleased, Vol. 1" CD/ 36:39.
Starting with two energetic offerings from PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS and SEVEN STOREY MOUNTAIN all is looking good. Whoop, RED ANIMAL WAR have let things slip a bit, damn. BRANDSTON are faring better with track four and TRIPLE FAST ACTION are coming in on the inside with a rather heavy riff, jesus christ! they've gone and ruined everything with a rather limp vocal line! Oh no, everything's gone to shit! POP UNKNOWN have stumbled over their *equally* drippy vocals, this is getting all a bit weak! Ohmygod! STARMARKET have just come up on the outside with their excellent and passionate rock song! Shit, DEAD RED SEA and THIS BEAUTIFUL MESS have just crashed into each other in a mess of wheels, petrol and very weak balldry! The winners are... PMFS followed by STARMARET with SEVEN STOREY MOUNTAIN coming in a close third. Pheeeww. *(JD)*
DEEP ELM, PO Box 36939, Charlotte, NC 28236, USA.
www.deepelm.com

V/A - "You've Raised Your Voice, Now Raise Your Fist" cassette.
The sound quality is brilliant, the songs the same. Bands on it are: ANNALISE, KNEISIA, WAT TYLER, INTENTION, ANTIBODIES, BUS STATION LOONIES, HELLKRUSHER, ABUSIVE YOUTH, AFFRAY, SAD SOCIETY, CHINEAPPLE PUNX, CIDERFIX, ANAL BEARD, WORM, LOS DESTRUCTOS and more. Really cool compilation. *(MH)*
ANARCHY, 17a Charnley Avenue, St Thomas, Exeter, Devon, EX4 1RD, UK.

VERBAL ABUSE - "Just An American Band" CD/ 44:00.
I only ever had this on tape and it was far from a good copy, so this was a welcome release. This LP is just a classic in my opinion and pre-cedes some of the best hardcore ever put out. 13 tracks of fast, raging hardcore from this band who hung out and lived with the likes of DRI and MDC. As it was recorded in 1984 it just pips "Dealing With It" as being such a crucial release. I could go on and on, but I would you hear it instead. There is also a live set, really ace quality and a great cover of "Paranoid". See ya in the pit fuck-heads, buy this. *(MH)*
BEER CITY, PO Box 26035, Milwaukee, WI 53226-0035, USA

VICTIMS OF SOCIETY - "Glasgow Kiss" CD/ 17:50.
Well played and fast old school hardcore here from Belgium. This reminds me of Sweden's INTENSITY maybe 'cos of their singer's high pitched voice. Nothing strays from the classic old school formula here but there's no denying that these guys do it well. The lounge-style album closer 'playboy subscriber' is a little un-subtle in it's piss taking of pornography fans, I know it's tongue in cheek but '...you are the lawyer and my heart is the case and the only thing left to do is come all over your fucking face', come on! Quite why the album is called 'Glaswgow Kiss' is anyone's guess too. *(JD)*
FUNTIME, Johan Quinten,Vlasselaar 13, 3221 Nieuwrode (Holsbeek), Belgium.
www.funtimerecords.com

VITAMIN X - "Down The Drain" CD/ 22:37.
23 tracks in 23 minutes. Mad styles on the XXX tip, that's for sure. Hey, these guys are from Amsterdam, I have a lot of respect for that! It must be hard work being nailed to the X with all those mother fuckin' US and UK tourists pissed and stoned outta there heads left, right and centre, day in, day out! Surely you'd just wanna take a gun out with you every single day! Anyway, this is good stuff, powerful, fast, angry, DIY straight-edge hardcore that verges on power violence at times. I'm sure these guys must be fucking heroes in The Netherlands, they're damn good at what they do, that's for sure. *(MD)*
HAVOC / UNDERESTIMATED.

VOODOO GLOW SKULLS - "Steady As She Goes" CD/ 38:18.
Don't know what it is about these guys but I just have never really liked their stuff. I've heard a lot of tracks here and there and none have really tickled my fancy, but this new album from these ska-punk pioneers...well, it still doesn't come anywhere near tickling my fancy and I continue not really liking their stuff, but I can say, this album is a lot heavier than any of the stuff I have hitherto heard and the excesses of ska seemed to have been dropped for a more hardcore approach. Not my bag, but you know, they're an established band and people are going to buy this regardless what I say so I may as well talk about something else like how maybe, even if it was arrived at subjectively we could still be ethically bound to an entirely objective sense of moral realism and that even in the throes of existential relativism and freedom there could still be ineluctable truth values to notions of right and wrong that we should adhere to? What do you think? *(DM)*
VICTORY, 346 N. Justine Street, Suite 504, Chicago, IL, 60607, USA.

WATSON, TOM - "Country & Watson" CD/ 53:54.
I had, for some reason, pinned my hopes on this being something like Tom LoMacchio, but it just didn't happen. When I was hoping for lonely ballads from a melancholic piano and guitar, I actually a got a much more upbeat solo project with plenty of programmed drums and bleeps in amongst the guitars and keys. Regardless that Chicago luminary Jim O'Rourke worked on this, it just doesn't hit any high or low points. About the most interesting thing is that one of the contributing musicians is Erik R. Bluhm who illustrated the best book I've read recently - "Car Camping: The Book of Desert Adventures" by Mark Sundeen. Punks, road-trips, drugs, booze, guns and deserts. Excellent. Also check out Erik and Mark's writing in their excellent Great God Pan series of books. This has turned into a book review because I'm just not too enamoured to write or listen to the record in question. Good books though. *(RR)*
THEOLOGIAN, PO Box 1070, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254, USA.

WAXWING - "Nobody Can Take What Everybody Owns" CD/ 35:52.
Third album here from the immensely great Seattle rock band WAXWING. Just like JETS TO BRAZIL though, this third album has not made me sit up and take notice as much as their past efforts did - but their sound has not changed, it's still that excellent indie rock vibe with Rocky's super distinctive vocals and I think, given more time, I'll begin to get this record. I definitely have not listened to this enough to warrant giving it a review of any kind really, but that shouldn't matter too much as I'm sure any fans of WAXWING's previous work will be picking this up as soon as it's out. One thing I have to point out though, and this is the kind of thing that makes me, on the whole, absolutely hate the idea of having external "PR" doing promotion for your band / record - with this CD came a few sheets of paper. Two were fine, a biography and a bit of press blurb that I, in general, ignore. On a third sheet though was a "supposedly" private e-mail between Holiday Matinee PR and Rocky Votolato (lead singer of WAXWING) and his label Second Nature. It's not only very silly, it's a total ass licking, sick inducing 'clever' piece of PR that I have to say, almost put me off playing this record at all! Please learn from this mistake David Brown! *"This is punk rock the way it was supposed to be created... Damn Rocky, this album is incredible. Thank you."* PURLEEZE!!! This isn't Dawson's fucking Creek you know! Only in America, huh? Only in America! *(MD)*
SECOND NATURE / www.secondnaturerecordings.com

WAYRIDERS, THE - "Pirate Radio" CD/ 51:55.
Hey, thes guys are *really* fucking cool. On the envelope this came in, it says "Finalists on 'The Next Big Thing' BBC One" and "As played by Chris Moyles and Session in Wales on Radio One". Also, on the biography sheet that came with the CD it tells me they have received airplay on MTV, Rapture TV and ITV. It also tells me that one of their tracks was chosen by REEF and TOPLOADER as "track of the week" on the BBC website. Also, I'm informed that their website has recieved over forty five thousand hits (in bold, just to emphasise that impressive figure, you know?). So with all this taken into consideration, I have to ask myself why a tenth rate LESS THAN JAKE wannabe with their eyes on "the big time" (and yes, they have a wanky "street team") even fucking bothered to send this in to Fracture at all. I do, however, feel really fucking bad that their singer also paid for a subscription (at the old rate, he obviously hasn't seen a copy for a long time) when he sent this in for review. This band doesn't need, or want, any underground coverage, so I'll stop wasting space now. *(MD)*
ROUGH EDGE.

WISDOM IN CHAINS - Self Titled CD/ 38:24.
When I saw the front cover of this CD I was expecting slow, rap-metal with some guy with a mouth full of marbles on vocals. But no, this is straight-up NY style hardcore in the vein of KILLING TIME, MADBALL, AGNOSTIC FRONT, BREAKDOWN, SUB ZERO and SICK OF IT ALL. The riffs ooze old school flavour, the vocals are gruff and shouty, but fit very well. This is also a lot faster than I was expecting and the whole thing is held together in that WARZONE 'brotherhood' way. W.I.C's lyrics are about stomping on Nazi's faces, liars, religion, and cowards and close things off nicely with a cover of THE MISFITS 'Angelfuck'. *(SM)*
GANGSTYLE, Ecrevissestraat 41, 6125, AW, Obbicht, The Netherlands.

WITHOUT SYSTEM - "What Will Be Will Be" CD/ 14:25.
A roaring EP of Japanese hardcore here with a full on assault of powerful scream-rock. Short and sweet review for a short and sweet CD. *(DM)*
H.G FACT, Nakano Shinbashi-M 105, Yayoi-cho 2-7-15, Nakano, Tokyo, Japan.

WOLFBRIGADE - "Progression / Regression" CD/ 38:15.
This lot used to be called WOLFPACK a few years ago and they were fucking mean when we put them on. One of them bred pitbulls and they all liked a drink or seven. They all looked HARD, lets put it like that. This CD is not for wimps and poseurs no sir, straight down the line

Swedish punk played loud, heavy and pissed off. Musically they`re really together with some cool guitar action going on, some real cheeky riffs hiding away that just reel you in without you noticing. Strange for a genre that tends to be as basic as possible and shun progression. Nothing overly fast here, just a big fat juggernaught of a sound with some bloke shouting his head off about how shit the world is. Opening lines "Society stabbed me in the back, The police twisted the knife, I dodn`t know what this is? But I think it`s called life?" Good stuff. You know that this band worships at the feet of MOTORHEAD, DISCHARGE and CIMEX, that`s taken for granted. As are the use of Skulls for graphics. You gotta have skulls! I don`t find a lot of swedish stuff like this overly interesting as a rule but this managed to keep my head nodding all the way through and has some chunky riffs to keep it going. This Is a really solid release and if you like your punk basic but in your face you can`t go wrong. Definitely for the folks with spikes, studs and black clothes. *(FU)*
HAVOC, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408, U$A.

WONKEY MONKEES, THE - "Blood Save Your Soul" CD/ 38:49.
Hey Ho - Escargot! So the French have a fierce rep for sticking their cutlery into anything that moves, and the tasteful front sleeve shot, of a gorilla's head platter, with a side order of banana slices, sure does back that up. Damn that brain looks juicy and lean though! Oh, there's music too from these WONKEY MONKEES, not just recipe tips, and a dozen really strong hits of non-stop get up and shake-a-leg on the dance floor Garage PunknRoll, that makes firm impact in all the right places. Much fun to be had here - Encore! *(PC)*
SHARK ATTACK, BP 171, 75563 Paris, CEDEX 12, France.

YEAST - "Expander" CD/ 44:26.
London's YEAST are back with a new album and pretty good it is too. Now on Golf Records (after a stint on Household Name) they return to the fore with a collection of varied post hardcore/rock and even metal! Track two 'Mindfield' reminds me of what PEGBOY might sound like if they were around today (with a bit of HOT WATER MUSIC thrown in) and providing a nice display of Stuart Mills' excellent vocals. Track three 'Mechanico' comes in reminding me of the dark off-beats that SHELLAC might throw at us. The chunky riff that makes up the most of this song doesn't half make me curl my bottom lip over my top one in "Phwoar... this is heavy" kind of way! These boys obviously like a bit of metal I reckon especially when you get to the chugging guitars of 'Engines'. Personally I prefer YEASTwhen they stick to their heavy and dischordant post hardcore than their full on 'chuggs n' china crashes' metal. *(JD)*
GOLF, Unit 15, Bushell Business Est, Hithercroft, Wallingford, Oxon, OX10 9DD, UK.
www.golfrecords.co.uk

Demo Reviews

BAREFOOT - "Just A Tourist" CD-R/ 13:36.
Aston (Boss Tuneage) was talking about these guys last week and I was like *"I'm sure I've heard the name before"* and I had, it was one of the items I didn't get chance to review last issue! I was told it is someone from BEAUTY SCHOOL DROP OUT but I can't remember what they sounded like, I'm sure they were more upbeat than this, faster and more punk rock. This is a lot more pop orientated and pedestrian and to be honest I found it quite dull and dated in sound. Maybe with a better production and little more depth to the overall sound, this would be good. As it stands, I find this demo too sugary and weak with incredibly annoying vocals. Didn't do anything for me I'm afraid. *(DS)*
www.barefoot-online.co.uk

GHOULIES, THE - "Communication" CD-R/ 27:01.
Jeez, totally shit kicking no-room-to-breath lightening fast action from this Swedish combo, hurtling at breakneck speed right outta Uppsala, all flaming guitars and throat burn vocals, and fuck do they smoke brothers and sisters! Not a sniff of info accompanied this home burnt disc, except some scrawled handwritten band / title detail. So I did some investigating of my own, and I'm hipper to THE GHOULIES now... and suspect that these 15 tracks ain't in fact a demo, as such, but a copy of their brand new album. Dunno what label it's gonna be on, but if you come across a copy, then snap it up. *(PC)*
NO ADDRESS.

MORONS, THE - "Punk Rock Truckers" CD-R/ 16:29.
Eight tracks of powerful and snotty don't-give-a-shit punk rock here in the vein of old SCREECHING WEASEL/RAMONES. It's nothing new, but like the Billy Bragg lyrics in the song they covered say, they "don't wanna change the world" and they won't, but they might well make our time in it a bit more enjoyable and that is just as worthwhile an endeavour. Also, random pictures of old WWF wrestlers on the inlay as band photos, will always work at winning me over. These guys are having fun and it's nice to see and even nicer to hear. *(DM)*
THE MORONS / http://come.to/themorons

MY LITTLE UNDERGROUND - "Real Life Isn't Like This" CD-R/ 14:04
OK, this is a weird mix... like the bastard offspring of BILLY BRAGG having a one night stand with GORGEOUS and using old MANIC STREET PREACHERS as the condom that split. But fear not, the love child of this insane night of coupling is, far from unlovable circus freak, and is instead a nice healthy rocking and rolling baby of correct melodic weight and size with a good head of hair and keen reflexes. In other words, these guys are alright. *(DM)*
www.geocities.com/mlu602/

NAMELESS - "The Salt Flats" CD-R/ 3:09.
One really interesting, passionate song here, that for some reason made me think of THE WHEATCHIEFS doing a dance routine with VICTIMS FAMILY. Superb vocal line and nice production, just a shame that this is such a stupid one-song release. I mean, just over three minutes is all I'm getting and that's it? What's up with that? What the fuck's the point? *(DM)*
PETRIFIED, PO Box 35, Penarth, CF64 4XB, UK

NONE OF THE ABOVE - "Them vs. Them" CD-R/ 8:28.
I have played this 7 times in the last 3 hours and I still can't make my mind up about it. It's well played, inoffensive indie punk with a rockin' edge and some nice song structures, it's got pace and direction but... it sounds like so many other bands I get to hear on demo and see live in Camden. Enjoyable but hardly impressive, I'm sure they're big news in their local scene and maybe one day they'll make a name for themselves. Whether or not that's in punk or indie circles is in their court. Of the 3 songs featured, there's no real standout, it goes by, it's likeable, but unmemorable. I do have a feeling they could prove me wrong mind you, there's just something about this that makes me not want to be too harsh. A band to watch out, but hey, the name, dudes there was a killer hardcore punk band from Oklahoma called N.O.T.A. and they ruled. Have you heard of them? Thought not! *(DS)*
www.n-o-t-a.com

ORCA - "Ways To Get Home" CD-R/ 7:04
I fucking despise gushing press releases that come with music... it always makes it sound kind of desperate and needy. These guys had one of the gushiest of all! Apparently these guys are "fast becoming one of the most exciting new bands to emerge from the south-west in recent years", and they have a "muscular sound" that combines "nu-metal and post-hardcore...creating an immense aural soundscape that acts as a solid base for their exceptional songwriting". Sounded like a bunch of wannabe MTV2 fodder to me though, but then again maybe I wouldn't know an immense aural soundscape if it jumped up and bit me? *(DM)*
Simon Foster, 1 Sommerset Court, Ivybridge, Devon, PL21 9RN, UK.
www.geocities.com/orcaband

PLASTICK - "Bet She Was a Goer" CD-R/ 25:02.
"She" being the Queen Mother by the way and I don't even want to think about it. No Charge No Profit seem to revel in digging up some of the most obscure punk rock from some dust vaults, putting it on a CDR, making a neat little inlay and mailing them out. This time around it's PLASTICK's two demos from '78 and '79 and it just sounds like muffled old punk, like ol' John Peel, bless him, digs up every now and then. Very rough, very raw, very basic. PETER AND THR TEST TUBE BABIES with less subtelty or skill. *(RR)*
NO CHARGE NO PROFIT (no contact)

PROJECT ABNER - Self Titled CD-R/ 13:00.
So I was perusing their website and reading this stuff about how they play their music just for the sheer hell of it, and how it's just about the rock, when they suddenly blurt out "we are not looking for fame or any sort of stardom but understand that it sometimes comes with the territory". Give me a fucking break. Especially so when PA actually use an outside company to manage their street team (give me another fucking break...) and boast about how they've been on that shitawful Men & Motors channel. Hardly going to endear me to them is it? Musically this is like a mix of everything that might get them signed to some dreamy major label - a little EARTHTONE 9, a little HUNDRED REASONS, a little ATDI, a little LOST PROPHETS and a little of plenty other MTV-rock bands too. Which is strange because they actually list a lot of far better influences from a varied pool of emo and hardcore of the past decade, but none of that shines through. There's a part in "Suited & Useless" where it goes from reggae-funk to bad-ass heavy metal and I just cringe. It's original, but there's a probably a very good reason why it's never been done before. If PA picked a style of their own, pinned it down and dropped the industry approach, they might be good, there's certainly skill and talent here but until then this is the wrong fanzine for the right review. *(RR)*
www.projectabner.com

SHINING RESERVES - "Demo" CD-R/ 9:51.
There are so many bands playing the indie / emo rock style now, I guess it draws a lot of people in from different backgrounds. This is pretty good, it's nothing I haven't heard a hundred times this year, but it has a certain charm. The vocals are spoken/sung in that slightly off-key manner which tends to irritate me, at least there's no gruff shouting to break things up and turn it into nonsense (*HWM are cool but bands who try and be them ,and there's fucking hundreds of 'em, aren't! You're a nice, polite, middle class boy, not some grizzled, 40 Marlboro a day, throat cancer-impending madman*). A lot of this does remind me of STAPLETON, a lot of people rate that band, I don't particularly like them very much. But this definitely slinks along the same avenue and is harmless enough, maybe needs a little toughening up to make people take notice but it's impressive enough as it stands. *(DS)*
mikerossiter@hotmail.com

SKAPICHE? - Self Titled CD-R/ 13:28.
This band wins the award for ska band with the best name ever in my books! And the funny name sets the (two) tone (-weak joke I know but I couldn't resist) for the rest of the demo. Great ska-tunes with hilarious lyrics, the best being "Ska Bike" about how unlike most ska bands who seem to sing about trains, as these guys live in a village they can only sing about their bike. A nice fun effort from this band from the Netherlands. Pick it up (pick it up, pick it up - lame joke Dan, been too many times in Fracture already!!) right now! *(DM)*
www.oiduts.net

SUPPER'S READY - "Private Sunset" CD-R/ 14:07.
It starts off pretty well with the first song being quite upbeat and enjoyable, almost ALKALINE TRIO, on every level, but then it just kinda drifts by and you're reminded of a lot of other bands, some good, some not so. Leans more towards pop than it perhaps should at this stage, with a harder edge and a better production I think this would be very enjoyable. As it stands it's just another demo from just another band... change the name, solidify the sound and then perhaps you have something good on your hands. A good start for sure, but the name... I wish bands wouldn't come up with their name whilst smoking weed, it ain't big, it ain't clever, it is however, CRAP! *(DS)*
holm2@bigfoot.com

VIRGIN SUICIDES - "Elizabeth Royal" CD-R/ 15:04.
Melodic punk rock, pretty rough and ready, but the songs are strong enough to shine through. They seem pretty clued-up and pissed-off, the playing is good and they belie their 16 years. Snotty and loud, it's good to know that people still wanna play this style of music rather than emo or ska-core. Basically you get 2 punk songs, one acoustic number and a little piano tinkling at the end. You can forgive them for the MANICS inspired anti-establishment and classic English lit' leanings (the words of Blake adorn the sleeve) and hope they stay feisty, spunked up and rabid. Very impressive indeed. *(DS)*
www.thevirginsuicides.co.uk

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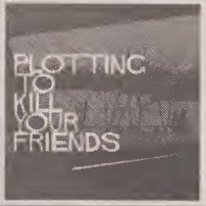

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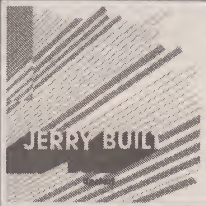

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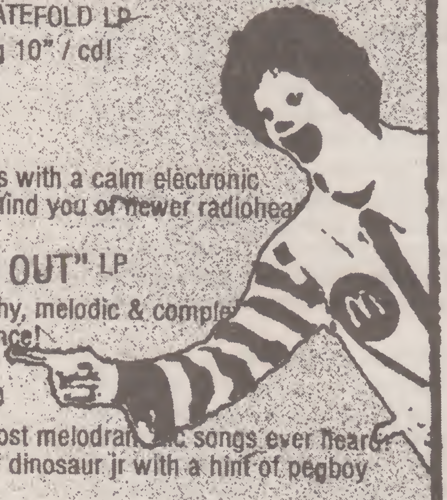

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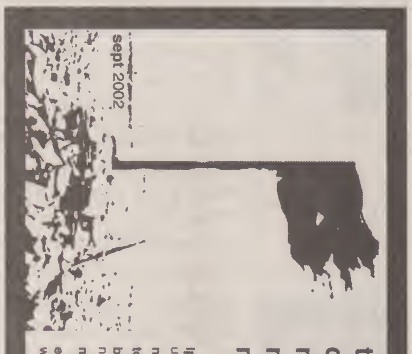

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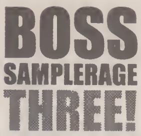

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FOUR SQUARE - "WHEN WEEKS WERE WEEKENDS" CD - £6 / $13 PPD
Already picking up some great reviews, FOUR SQUARE is a new band from Toronto featuring ex members of RED FISHER, TWO LINE FILLER, TRIGGER HAPPY and DOUG. This is great melodic power pop-punk / indie-rock already drawing GET UP KIDS and ATARIS comparisons, but to us FOUR SQUARE have apretty undefinable sound, but we think its rocking and lovely artwork to boot!!

ORGANIC - "THE LIFE AND TIMES OF SAL SAGEV" CD - £6 / $13 PPD
Another cracking band, from Nevada, described as JAWBREAKER and CRIMPSHRINE's pissed off angry young offspring, and I reckon that's a pretty good comparison! This has that whole great US underground feel of the late 80s/early 90s, of all those classic early Lookout releases, and it's a pretty darn excellent little record!!!

the Miles Apart
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SHUTDOWN - "1990-1995" CD - £6 / $13 PPD
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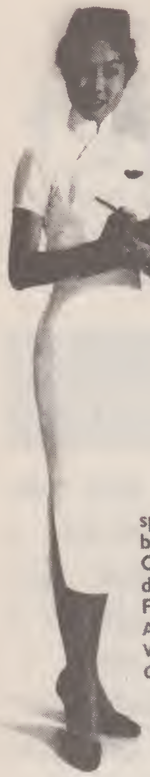

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Questions? E-mail : dave@assemblylinemusic.com

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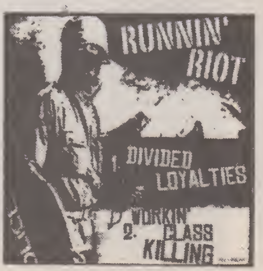

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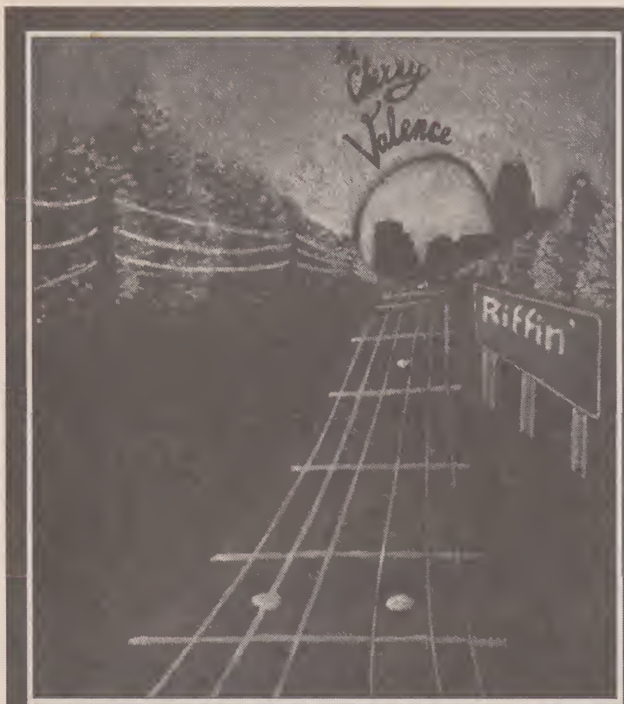
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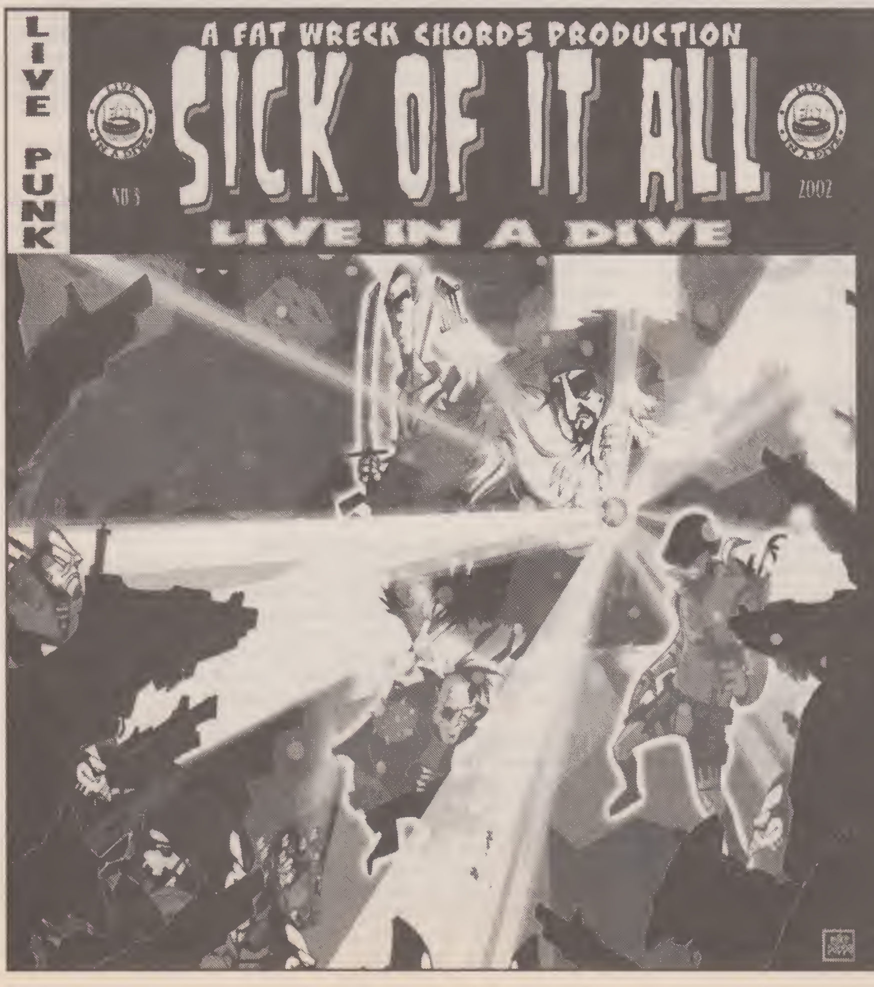
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FUNTIME #23/ 90 pages/ A4/ printed/ €4.96.
Well, first off this 'zine is in Belgian I'd assume from the Belgium address so I can't understand a word of it, but I wish I could as it seems jam-packed with cool reviews and interviews with bands like SNUFF, RANDY, SUPERSUCKERS and many more. I can say for sure though that the free 22 song CD that comes with it is sweet as fuck with tracks from folk like GOOD RIDDANCE, GRADE, WHIPPERSNAPPER, LAST DAYS OF APRIL, (INTERNATIONAL) NOISE CONSPIRACY and more! *(DM)*
Funtime, Beukepleinbaan 30, 3111 Wezemaal, Belgium.

GADGIE #14/ 27 pages/ A5/ copied/ 50p & SAE.
First issue I've seen of this 'zine though I've wanted to get a copy for a while now. A nice mix of stuff in here: random columns from interesting people throughout, Marv's own rants and observations, reviews and an interview with PANIC make for nice well-rounded contents well worth your fifty pence. The cool piece on zombie flicks was my personal favourite bit being a fellow fan of the flesh-eating undead, and while I don't agree at all with what Marv says about the war on terrorism I like how he isn't scared to express his opinions whatever they are. A nice free-thinking 'zine with a good sense of humour throughout. *(DM)*
Marv, PO Box 93, Boston, Lincolnshire, PE21 7YB, England.

HEADWOUND #13/ 35pages/ A5/ copied/ 50p or trade.
OK, first I have to point out that this being submitted for review made me laugh after reading the continuous slagging off within of Fracture and people who seek Fracture's approval in the UK underground. If they are that bothered and opposed to Fracture then why they'd seek it's approval themselves by sending their 'zine for review is beyond me? But, that complaint aside, I'm glad that they did because this is a fucking cool read. First, an explanation... it is actually the first issue of HEADWOUND but they number it as #13 because this is actually a joining together of CAT ON A STRING and CARGO CULT 'zines into one and those two 'zines between them had 13 issues so rather than start afresh they carried on from where they left off. This 'zine is really opinionated which is great to see, lots of views and vitriol, anger and attitude that make it political and damn proud of it with rants about everything from the Church, to Nazis and everything in between with my own favourite being the critique and piss-take of the protesting parasites the Socialist Workers Party. Another good thing about its unabashed political outlook is that it carries over into the interviews. EASTFIELD, ACTIVE SLAUGHTER, RICH LARD, CIDERFEX and ANARCHY SPANKY are all asked more probing questions that the usual, "so, who are you and when did you form" with all the interviewed bands giving some interesting responses. Small but readable print with no space wasted also means that each page is crammed with text making its 35 pages swell with substance. In the words of the A-Team's John "Hannibal" Smith, "Nice, real nice". *(DM)*
PO Box HP171, Leeds, LS6 1XX, England

I'M ONLY DOING THIS 'ZINE TO GET FREE CD'S #2/ 32 pages/ A5/ copied/ 50p & SAE.
I'd like to apologise to FALL SILENT after reading their interview in here. I reviewed their last album for MASS MOVEMENT and fell hook, line and sinker for their whole Christian rouse. Thing was, it wasn't just the thanks list that convinced me, but some of their lyrics too! Oh well, I feel well and truly ashamed at my stupidity and am man enough to admit I was wrong and if you get this 'zine and read the interview you'll understand exactly what I'm chatting on about. Unfortunately though, that'd be pretty much the only reason to get what is a pretty odd 'zine that seems more of a pamphlet to plug the writer's band PILGER than anything else (and obviously a shameless attempt at getting free CD's, but kudos for the honesty I guess?). I mean, there is a few good bits, and besides FALL SILENT there's an interview with DISPOSABLE HEROES too, but all of that just seems second to the task of putting over his band and a lot of seemingly in-jokes that just fall flat unless you are in said band. I hope he enjoys his free CDs though and maybe next issue he'll be over his band and able to just write a good 'zine and not an extended press release? *(DM)*
38 Gatcombe, Southampton, SO31 5PX, UK.

INFINITE MONKEY #3/ A4/ 28 pages/ copied/ £1 & postage.
What I like most about this is the "new to me section", funny and something that I think of when I get new stuff and old classics on vinyl, CD or tape that I'd never heard before. Also interviews with ATOMSMASHER, BOGDAN RACZYNSKI, SONG OF ZARATHUSTRA and ZANN - no I've never heard of any of them either. But there's loads of reviews of zines and music that I have heard of off, so at least it's definitely hardcore related -ha, ha. *(MH)*
PO Box 169, Bradford, BD1 2UJ, UK.

INSIDE KNOWLEDGE #4/ 46 pages/ A4/ printed/ €2.50?
This is one slick looking zine from nice Dutch guy Martijn Welzen. He's got his design down and he covers a lot of bands that might interest you - GOOD CLEAN FUN, DRIFT, (I)NC, MAX REBO KIDS, AVENGED SEVENFOLD, DARWIN and more. The interviews are generally all good pieces and things are topped off with a standard, but healthy review section. I guess my only suggestion would be more personal text - columns and the like, just because the Inside Knowledge guys are obviously very DIY at heart and I think they'd have a lot of relevant, interesting stuff to say. The whole this is obviously a real labour of love (otherwise they wouldn't get it printed on real nice paper and have a slick card cover) and should be supported as much as possible. And yes, it's all in English which is a bonus for us tourists! A great zine, can't wait to see the next issue. *(MD)*
Inside Knowledge, Mgr. Nolenstraat 14, 6043 BV Roermond, The Netherlands.

JELLYBRAIN #10/ 36 pages/ A5/ copied/ 50p & SAE.
I can't say enough good things about this 'zine and more to the point I can't say anything bad about it either which is the most important thing. Full of jokes, cartoons, weird facts and Paul's sick, irreverent yet intelligent humour this opinionated and side-splitting 'zine would be great with just that, but it goes one better with a veritable shit-load of reviews plus cool interviews with THE PEAWEES, MIKABOMB and MIGHTY GORDINIS. A true original with a unique and hilarious style all of it's own. Get it now and have yourself a good giggle at the world before it's too late. While you're at it ask Paul for his distro list as well. *(DM)*
Paul Raggity, 4 Clarence Street, Nuneaton, CV11 5PT, UK

MASS MOVEMENT #12.1 & 12.2/ 117 pages combined/ A5/ printed/ £2.50 ppd.
Tim has gone and made this issue a massive double issue consisting of two separate 'zines. Put together this makes a gargantuan read with tonnes of interviews (BAD RELIGION, BREZHNEV, ASSERT, MERCURY LEGION, RKL and ALEX CHANDON to name but a few), reviews, columns and features. Some of the features are good (ASSERT tour diary) but some (King of the Scene) do make you think Mr. Cundle might have a *little* too much time on his hands! The interview with Chandon is really interesting and it's great to see a 'zine doing something different than just the regular obligatory band interviews. The interview with MERCURY LEGION though is pretty cringe-worthy with such gems from their vocalist Bryce as "the epiphany in my life was when I suddenly realized that Jesus Christ really was the messiah" and "I have spent many years studying just about every known religion in the world but the only one I was never able to disprove was Christianity" which, as a student of philosophy myself, left me believing that, with those conclusions, his enquiries may have been a little bit lacking in thoroughness, but the long interview with BAD RELIGION should counteract any brain numbing caused by that shite. Overall though, a cool new issue. *(DM)*
Tim, 18 Hazeldene Avenue, Bridgend, CF31 2JW, UK

MONKEYS IN THE SUN #1/ 56 pages/ A5/ printed/ £1.00 & SAE.
Little Emma bounces back into the zine scene after a long hiatus (about 3 years) and does it with style. This is like a glorified diary with funny shit about her old work place (I hope you sent your 3 supervisors a copy each!), trips to New Orleans, last years Out Of Spite festival, Amsterdam and lots of other fun stuff. The writing is very good, it's personal, warm and totally engrossing. There's plenty of punk rock related shit and I have to say this is one of the best zines I've read this year. It's got that cut 'n' paste *"but I know what I'm doing"* style which reminds me of the collective zine from Brighton that I now totally forget the name of... and ZONKED! I guess they're printed at the same place because the photographic reproduction and paper are identical. With a furry trim on the back cover and a guaranteed monkey on every page how the fuck can you go wrong? To anyone thinking of putting together a fanzine, have a look at this and see how it's done. Send the money now and invite yourself into the crazy world of Emma, just do it. *(DS)*
27 Sovereign Drive, Botley, Southampton, S030 2SR, UK.

MORGENMUFFEL #10/ 24 pages/ A5/ copied/ 50p and SAE.
It's the first time I've come across this 'zine and I wish I'd found out about it sooner because I really loved it! A nice mix of comic strip and text, this 'zine is not only full of cool stories and information, but has a unique and distinctive style thanks to Isy's illustrations that makes it stand out from other 'zines. I especially liked the cartoon about September 11th and the aftermath anti-war stuff...it very much reflected my own experiences and it's always nice to discover others who despise the socialist factions that backbite and divide in their sickening recruitment drives at every London protest! The enclosed I SPY tick-box is something I shall bring to all my next demonstrations. A really good, readable, interesting, opinionated and refreshingly different 'zine with a lot of character and humour. *(DM)*
Isy, PO Box 74, Brighton, BN1 42Q, UK

NEW SCHEME, THE #6/ 72 pages/ A4/ newsprint/ $15.00 for a six issue sub.
Pretty good newsprint zine here, which is something that seems to have dwindled immensely in the US over the last couple of years with the advent of "online zines" (do people really read those things?) which has a real early Punk Planet / Fracture feel to it. The interviews with CASKET LOTTERY, PG. 99, Joel Schalit, Copper Press and more are generally pretty good, although the LAWRENCE ARMS one could have easily just gone to one page I reckon. But still, I have a feeling that in a few years time the newsprint 'zine will be a thing of the past (which will be tragically ironic considering how much stick we got for being "just another American wannabe newsprint 'zine") so I think picking them up while you still can is essential if you want any kind of documentation of the current underground to look back on in years to come. Your internet "cache" is not going to be of any use to you in 20 years really, is it? So yeah, on the whole this is a pretty good zine that can only get better. *(MD)*
PO Box 19873, Boulder, CO 80308, USA.

ORGAN #73/ 48 pages/ A4/ newsprint/ £1.00 & SAE.
If someone comes up to me at a show selling fanzines I usually send them over to Hilary with a message *"Can you buy one for DS"* which seems to work! I buy zines, a lot of them are pretty poopy but every once in awhile you'll be on the bus home thinking *"this is pretty darn good"*. It's hard to sell zines at shows, you have to be confident, friendly and persuasive without being an annoying fuck. What I do hate is people shoving the latest issue of ORGAN in my face at shows and standing there saying *"It's been going 10 years, support the scene"*. I'm sorry, this isn't my scene. Mind-numbingly dull reviews of bands I don't care about, interviews that say nothing to me and mostly with bands that are aiming to be the *"next big thing"* in their field of generic indie schlop. Ok, these guys have been doing this for a long time, they support the bands and labels they like, fair enough, but I just get that itchy bad vibe from reading this. It's like a training ground for wannabe NME style journalists who believe in lack of style over lack of content. I'm sure they're nice people, I've been told so by many friends, but this is a glorified student union music rag. The zine reviews section is good though. At least they have one. Good intentions sure, but something just doesn't sit right with me. *(DS)*
Unit 212, 326 Kensal Road, London, W10 5BZ, UK.

ORGAN # 74/ 48 pages/ A4/ newsprint/ £1.00 & SAE.
This is the first time I've seen the well established Organ 'zine in it's A4 glossy cover format. The one thing about it is that the content is so rammed in that I can hardly tell which paragraph I should look at next. I know it's cool to have a lot of stuff in there but one really needs to be able to digest it and navigate easily around it too. Bands covered include OTEP (urgh!), MIOCENE (hmm), VACANT STARE (aargh!), CARDICACS, DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN as well as an interview with IGNITION RECORDS. A varied if cluttered read. *(JD)*
ORGAN, Unit 212, 326 Kensal Road, London, w10 5BZ, UK.

PLASTIC BOMB #39/ 122 pages/ A4/ Printed/ €3.50+IRC.
Der Bomb ist wieder da, 122 Seiten prall gefüllt mit Interviews, Reviews, News, Artikeln und vieles mehr! Die Bands die geinterviewt wurden, u.a. sind: INC, Daviolo Rosso, 8mm (da fehlt die Orange davor oder ?!!), Terrorgruppe, DRI... es gibt auch einsichtige Interviews von den Männern die hinter den Labels, Impact Records & Wolverine Records stehen. Auf Seite 40 kann man lesen was die Insel Teneriffe im Rahmen Punk anzubieten hat, und ab Seite 64 der zweite Teil des wichtigen Artikels "Hirntod macht unpolitisch", der sich mit der Aufgabe beschäftigt, die Verbindungen zwischen den Rechten- und Punkszenen, sprich: Distros, Bands, Labels, auseinanderzusetzen bzw. zu enthüllen. Eine tolle Leistung Swen. Es gibt

einiges hier drinnen das mir nicht besonders intressiert, aber abgesehen davon, zwischen den 122 Seiten gibt es viele lesenswerte Zeilen, damit man sich für eine lange Zeit beschäftigen kann. Preiswert & 100% Punk. Aber Knock Out Records im Vertrieb von HMV... *(TC)*
Plastic Bomb, Postfach 100205, 47002 Duisburg, Germummy

POSITIVE CREED #3/ 32 pages/ A5/ copied/ 80p ppd.
Lots of cool interviews, especially the one with FOUR LETTER WORD which sees Welly giving his two cents on all kinds of things, plus others with NEW MODEL ARMY, JESS SPICE, SAD SOCIETY, BLACKFISH RECORDS, OUT COLD, RED LETTER DAYS and LOVEJUNK. Apparently the guy who does this 'zine has come under attack for including poetry in it but I've always liked poetry myself being a closet dark poet and can't see what the problem really is. Supposedly some people have said that poetry has no place in punk but to my mind, it's people who say certain things have no place in punk that have no place in punk! Anyway, very basic layouts mixed with interesting ones does give it at times a kind of incomplete feel, but all in all a nice effort with lots to read. *(DM)*
17a Charnley Avenue, St. Thomas, Exeter, Devon, EX4 1RD, England

PUKE #6/ 40 pages/ A5/ copied/ 50p and SAE.
Very old-school looking cut and paste 'zine here made even older school looking with the infamous SEX PISTOLS queen/safety pin image included on the cover, and it is true this 'zine shows a great love for '77 style of punk, but don't be fooled, this isn't just some head in the sand, no-one's better than the Pistols tripe, this is a 'zine bursting with opinion, humour, anger, and, well...puke! The barbed fuck-you attitude oozes from the pages like vomitus-mucus from the rants to the reviews and while I do not agree with with a lot of what is said, I admire the sentiment of freedom and two fingers to the world. Also, this 'zine is crammed with cuttings of weird newspaper stories and clippings...it's like someone made a fanzine around the inlay of one of JELLO BIAFRA's records and bizarrely it works really well. Interviews with MERE DEAD MEN and ANTIBODIES round it off and at 40 pages for just 50 pence you can't go wrong! *(DM)*
Becca, 126 Pineapple Road, Stirchley, Birmingham, B30 2TX, UK

PUKE #7/ 40 pages/ A5/ copied/ 50p and SAE.
Another issue of this pissed off and proud 'zine sees more of the same opinion, anger and humour plus more great cuttings and clippings just to highlight for those who still haven't got it yet, that this world we live in is one fucked up place! The usual honest reviews offer up some refreshing and often hilarious criticisms and interviews with THE PITS, GREENLAND WHALEFISHERS and, uh, BULLET OF DIPLOMACY (yes an interview with me, but at least unlike our MP's I wear my vested interests proudly on my sleeve!) make this a nice all rounder with a lot of bite and spunk. Sometimes a little too much bite and spunk as this 'zine is one of the many 'zines out there that seem to have a major chip on their shoulder about Fracture which I really don't understand and hope they'll get over, but hey, differences of opinion is what punk rock is all about and that kind of uncompromising attitude and belief in calling it as you see it with not a single ass kissed or belief held back really is what Puke is all about and whether you agree or disagree with the opinions expressed you have to be glad that there are people like Becca out there who aren't afraid to say what they feel as it's much more interesting to read something like this than yet another bland asskissing yes-'zine that is blatantly nothing more than a way of getting it's writer free CDs! Definitely "the spew with a view" and well worth a look. *(DM)*
Becca, 126 Pineapple Road, Stirchley, Birmingham, B30 2TX, UK

RAD PARTY #27, 28 & 29 / 84 pages/ A6/ printed/ price?
These French zines look absolutely fucking ace - written in the style of Cometbus, Burn Collector, I'm Johnny And I Don't Give a Fuck et al - that sort of very off-hand anecdotal way, that's almost like having a conversation with the writer. And within this writing there's tales and a massive amount of record reviews all written as one long piece which looks to be a great way of doing it. Every good band ever is mentioned in the text too! This is interspersed with some of the author's own excellent art, very much in a Jaime Hernandez (Love & Rockets) style of punk kids rocking out or hanging out. Each issue is crammed with reading too, so you're getting plenty of mileage your money. Unfortunately I know all of this by reading Rad Party with my pretty flimsy grasp of the French language, because this is written in the native tongue. If anyone reading this is fluent in French I'll happily send these to you, because they're just too good wait for my French to improve so I can read them better! *(RR)*
Small Budget, BP No. 7, 78 110 Le Vesinet, Cedex, France.

R.E.P.E.A.T. #18/ 104 pages/ A4/ printed/ £2.00 & SAE.
This is so thick and heavy, jam-packed full of text and pictures, it's a true labour of love and the amount of hours that go into producing one issue must be huge. I'm sure this started life as a MANICS tribute zine with local (Cambridge) news. It's grown somewhat now and there are plenty of varied contributions, from newspaper articles to reviews, letters, thoughts and so much more than I have time or space to get through here. I've read snippets, an interview with the excellent RIGHT TURN CLYDE, an article on crap demos and what you can do to improve them on every level... I think we should have a similar feature very soon! There's politics, a thousand opinions and lots of bands, from the unknown local heroes to RIDE, ASH and the MANICS. But don't let that put you off as there is so much in here, you'll find plenty to keep you busy for a few hours. I just can't believe the size of this, it's like 3 decent sized zines all rolled into one. These are the people to contact if you want to play Cambridge as well, you wanna be sending a well-stamped up SAE as this boy's got some weight to it. A pop punk indie extravaganza. *(DS)*
35, Aylesborough Close, Cambridge, CB4 2HH, UK.

SAVAGE AMUSEMENT #17/ 12 pages/ A4/ copied/ Free with SAE.
Another instalment of punk rock news and reviews from the big gay bear of the North. Trev loves punk rock and oi!, not much else, that's cool. Some people are into this old UK punk guff still and there's no one more qualified to head the table than this guy. The reviews are the best part, he loves me! I'm a *"Fracture elitist"* apparently, not sure what that is but I think Trev means it in a non-too positive way. So what you get here is informative, opinionated and hilarious coverage of the *real* punk rock scene. Apparently the North East is the place to be for punk rock, but last time I was there (Newcastle), the pubs closed at 2pm and I was propositioned by some old queen down by the river, maybe it's a queer punk town? Back street, back room and back door action all the way. Only joking, we know only real men live up there. Trev's a big CHAMBERLAIN fan so you know he has a sensitive side to his thuggish persona. I love reading this, makes me laugh out loud and not too many things make me do that these days, old people falling over, car crashes and the absurdity of my life. Well worth checking out, old school punk for those who never appreciated the first 5 QUEEN albums. *(DS)*
Trev Howarth, Rosehill, 20 New Front Street, Tanfield Lea, Stanley, DH9 9LY, UK.

SEMTEX #5 / 52 pages/ A5/ printed/ €2 or $2 ppd.
Excellent looking zine from a few enthusiastic Belgian kids - the first thing that will grab you about Semtex is how good it looks; every page is laid out well, with a very 'designed' feel to it but not detracting from the clean text. Secondly you'll notice how good the writing in Semtex is - they have a great mix of personal and factual, with this issue having interviews with YAGE and SHORA as well as plenty of personal columns tackling all manner of punk-related stuff and beyond. There's also writings from loads of different contributors after the events of September 11th last year - most of it is pretty intelligent stuff calling for rationale and thought, apart from one fucking idiot (from America I hasten to add) saying how they need to "make the entire middle east a desert" and "that America needs to finally lock its fucking doors on any and all foreigners trying to live here". Honestly, the fucking stupidity of a minority of people involved in the punk scene amazes me at times. But like I said, all the other writings are quite inspiring pieces. Anyway, there's also plenty of your usual reviews in here... so all in all, this is great zine that you probably should be checking out. *(RR)*
Collegelaan 91, 8530 Harelbeke, Belgium.

SLUG AND LETTUCE #71/ #20 page/ A3/ newspaper/ $2.00 ppd.
Another great issue of this staple of the global punk rock zine world. As always, the majority of this is book, music and zine reviews - and as always has one of the best zine review sections in any fanzine around. Things are topped off with adverts and decent amount of personal (and moving) columns. This zine is DIY, from the heart and now 16 years old! *(MD)*
Christine, PO Box 26632, Richmond, VA 23261-6632, USA.

SUSPECT DEVICE #38/ 60 pages/ A5/ copied/ £1.50 & SAE.
It just keeps going and no doubt after me and you are gone from this earth in many years time (hopefully!), SD will still be putting out a new issue regular as clockwork! This issue is your usual high-quality SD affair with interviews this time from DEAD INSIDE, SOLEA, ENDSTAND, DEADLINE, SPEEDWELL and RABIES BABIES most of which are pretty decent reads whether you like the bands or not - just the way it should be. There's some decent columns this time around, I especially enjoyed Pete Zonked's as well as Paul Fox's delve right back into his punk rock anecdotes about getting body-searched by Becky Bondage. To this day the guy only looks 30 years old, so I can't believe he was a teenager seeing THE EXPLOITED in 1982! This issue also has it's usual load of zine and record reviews as well as plenty of info to keep you up to date in the punk rock world. After the sad demise of Vision On zine, Suspect Device stands taller than ever as a stalwart in the UK scene and if you haven't seen it yet, you must be a lost cause. *(RR)*
PO Box 295, Southampton, SO17 1LW, UK.

THE BLOODING #?/ 48 pages/ A5/ copied/ price?
More indie based than punk, this has interviews with FUGAZI, LES SAVY FAV, Richie Mills (CABLE), ORGAN magazine, Bob Weston, photographer Steve Gullick and TYLER. Articles on the Dance of Days film show/talk and this years All Tomorrows Parties event. There's gig and record reviews as well as a few other bits and bobs. It comes across as fairly impersonal and overall it's yer standard indie zine fare. Didn't really come away any more enthralled or enlightened but it's not a bad zine. *(DS)*
81 Mary St, Bovey Tracey, Devon, TQ13 9HQ, UK.

TRUST #94/ loadsa pages/ A4/ Printed/ €2+IRC.
Tja, Trust nähert sich allmählich an die 100er Ausgabe... kaum zu glauben damals als ich die Nummer 4 gekauft habe, dass diese Fanzine so lang am leben sein würde. Das Layout ist einfach und visuell angenehm, und inhaltlich in dieser Ausgabe gibt es Interviews von: Sonic Youth, Dogtownboys,Botanica, Bob Log III, Aina, Dillinger 4, Burst... Lustig zu lesen im News, was die Jungs bei The Icarus Line gamacht haben, nämlich Scheisse gebaut im Hard Rock Cafe, Texas - sprich: die Vitrine in der die Gitarre von Stevie Ray Vaughn gestaut wird, zertrümmert wurde! Schade! Interessant war die History of Skaterock (Part 1); besonders, dass der erste Rock schon 1965 erschienen ist, lange vor den Thrasher Samplern! Der beste Bandname ohne zweifel ist Wheely McSidewalk and the Ballbearings - geil! Naturlich gibt's einen Haufen Reviews dabei, Tourdates, Columns und Ads. A nice read! *(TC)*
Trust, Postfach 110762, 28087 Bremen, Germoney.

VIOLENCE #3/ A4/ 60 pages/ printed/ price?
My first time seeing this mag, but have heard some good stuff about it. Cool interviews with Y, REACHING FORWARD, HOLIER THAN THOU, NO COMMENT, NOOTHGRUSH, SCHOLASTIC DETH, LACK OF INTEREST and stacks more. I've heard it described as something similar to the late Monkeybite, but this is far better. Although it covers the same type of stuff, the interviews in here are much better. Some cool layouts, reminding me of my own zine at times - though these folks have better software than I have - ie I have none. Some good columns and the usual reviews and sharp photos make this a must have. Really good effort all around, and interesting to boot. (MH)
SMG Records, POB 46, 21500 Biala Podl, Poland.

WATER INTO BEER #1/ 40 pages/ A5/ copied/ 50p & SAE.
Looks like a standard first issue affair, rough 'n' ready cut 'n' paste style and interviews with 46 ITCHY, TANGAROA and JEREMY BEADLE'S HAND. There are a few reviews, a daft piece on toilet football and plenty of other bits to read. What makes this a good zine is that the guys doing it have some interesting things to say, including a fine column about how and when one of the guys first became aware of punk rock in 1996 and how his life changed for the better. He then mentions a time when he almost left punk rock circles because of the anti-social and condescending attitude of a band called (SPUNGE). It's refreshing to see clued up youngsters knowing the right and wrongs of *"punk rock"* mentality. I hope they retain that edge and keep this fanzine alive as it's a good read and can only get better. *(DS)*
Tim Livesey, 48 West Park Grove, Leeds, LS28 2DY, UK.

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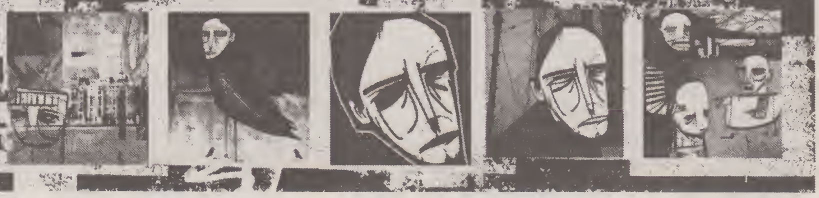

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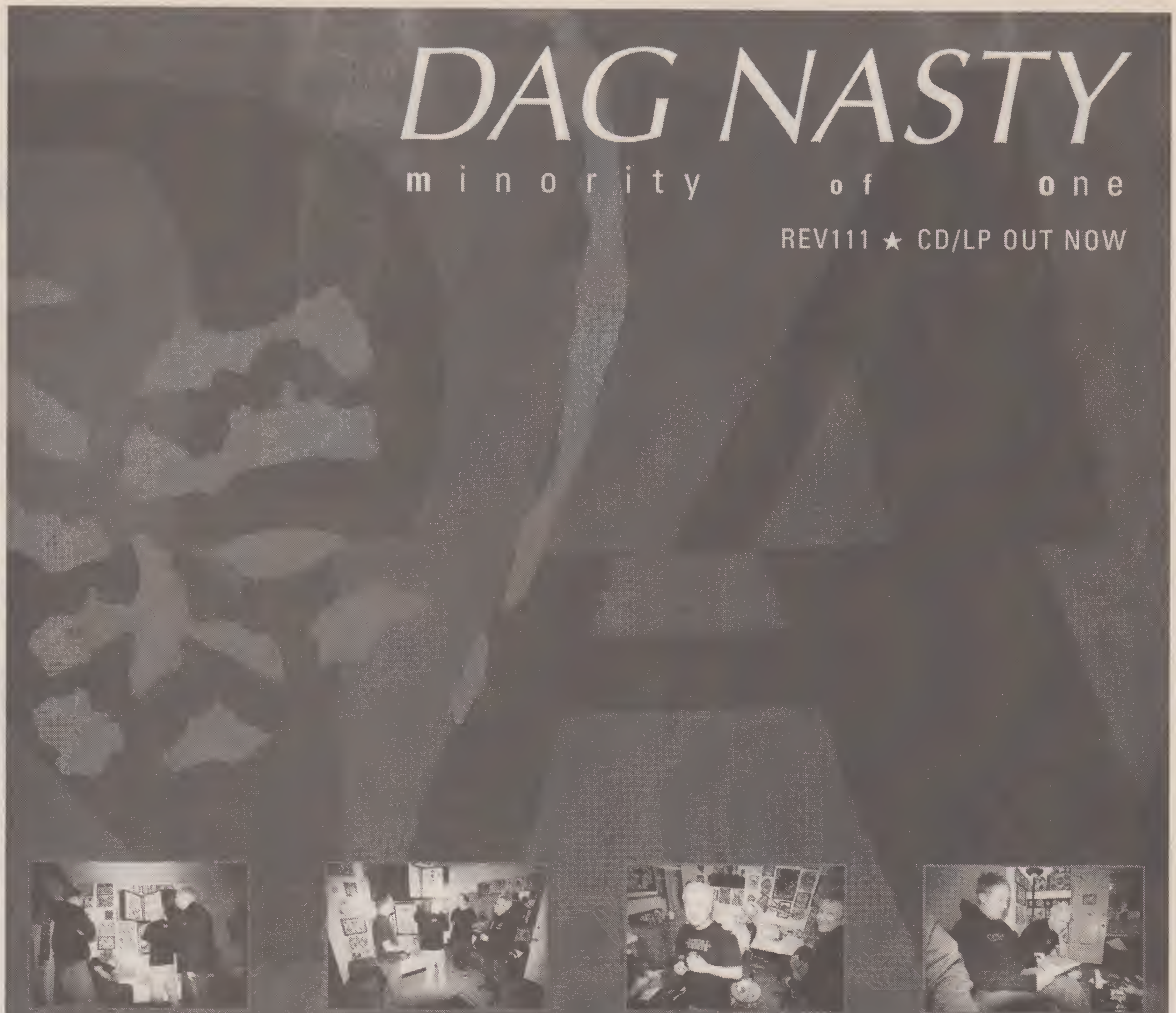

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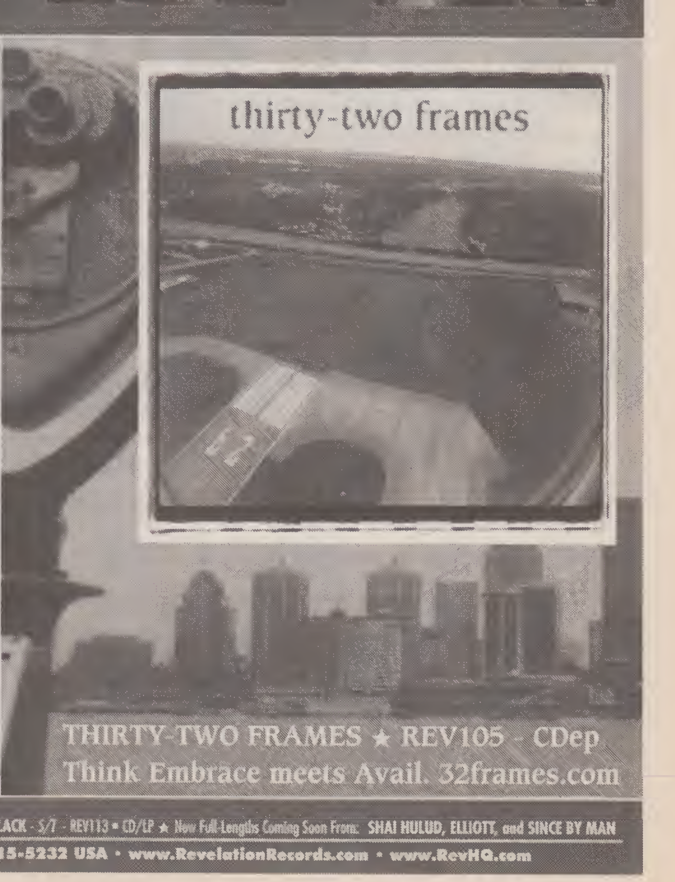

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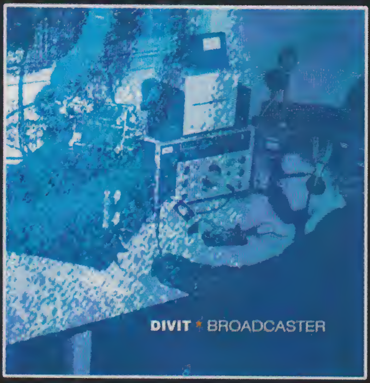
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